
Imprimatur,

Geo. Royse RR^{mo} in Christo Patri,
ac Dom. Dom. Johanni Archiep.
Cantuar. a Sacris Domest.

Januar. 17,
1697. C

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Conversation in Heaven.

BEING

DEVOTIONS;

Consisting of

MEDITATIONS and PRAYERS,

ON

Several Considerable Subjects in

Practical Divinity.

Written for the Raising the Decay'd
Spirit of PIETY.

By *LAWRENCE SMITH, LL.D.*
Fellow of St. John's College in Oxford.

L O N D O N,

Printed by J. R. for Thomas Speed, at the
Three Crowns near the Royal Exchange
in Cornhill, 1693.

T O

The most Reverend Father in God,

JOHN;

Lord Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*,
Primate and Metropolitan of all
England, and one of Their Majesties
most Honourable Privy Council.

May it please your Grace,

I Beg your Pardon for my
Presumption in Dedicating
this Performance to your Name;
but my Experience of your
Goodness and Obliging Tem-
per has encouraged me to this
freedom of Recommending it
to your Patronage.

My Lord, 'twas not an Am-
bition of appearing in Print,
A 3 which

The Epistle Dedicatory.

which induced me to this Publication ; but an hearty Desire (since I am not in a Publick Station) to do all the Good I can in my Private Capacity ; and if this Endeavour may but prove Instrumental to the encrease of Piety and Devotion in any, I shall not Repent my Pains, but acknowledge the Success with all Thankfulness to God's Glory.

May the Almighty long preserve your Grace, and make you a great Blessing to this Church ; which is the earnest Prayer, of

My Lord,

*Your Grace's most Obedient Son,
and humbly devoted Servant,*

Lawrence Smith.

THE

THE
P R E F A C E
TO THE
R E A D E R.

Christian Reader,

THE Subjects here treated on are some of the weightiest and most considerable in all Practical Divinity ; and being Matters of the greatest Importance to a good Life, and consequently to our future Everlasting Welfare ; were therefore industriously handled with all imaginable Plainness and Perspicuity, that Persons of all Ranks and Qualities being nearly con-

THE PREFACE

cern'd in them, they might accordingly lye Level to the Capacities of all men.

The Author is not Ignorant that several excellent Treatises of this Nature have been transmitted into publick View and Consideration, which though he has not the Vanity to think he has excell'd, yet he hopes this further Help to Devotion may not be without its proper Usefulness.

The Composer of these Devotions is indeed conscious of his inability to Gratifie the Expectations of a nicely Critical Reader; but however he had much rather expose himself to the Censures of the Over-curious, than fail of promoting in the least the Piety and Devotion of truly Religious and well-disposed People: To such he Writes, who having a Spiritual discerning of Spiritual things, these Spiritual Exercises of Prayer and Holy Meditation, are the likeliest
to

to the READER.

to prove Relishing and Acceptable unto them.

Devout and Pious Meditation is that which at once Delights and Profits, Recreates and improves in Goodness; rendering the Mind by degrees of a Godlike Celestial Temper: It ennobles the faculties of our Souls, by making them conversant about truly Great and Noble Objects; things Spiritual, Divine and Heavenly! It withdraws us from the Noise and Tumult, exempts us from the Cares, Fears, Troubles and Vexations of this Lower World, and causing us to dwell much in our thoughts and desires Above, it makes our Spirits too Big and Haughty, too Nice and Delicate for any impure sublunary Enjoyments; nay, of such an Indifferency of Affection even to this Worlds Innocent and Allowable Gratifications, as that no Loss or Detriment which befalls them, no imaginary Excellency which is in them, is able to Excite our Passions,

The PREFACE

Passions, to Discompose our Thoughts, to abate our Religious Diligence, to weaken our Faith, impair our Trust, or so much as Cool our Love for God, Holiness, and Celestial Happiness.

All other things Cloy and Sate with their often Repeated use, but the more we exercise this most Excellent Duty, devout Contemplation, the more shall we desire to be still exercised therein : Its Pleasures will grow up on our Hands, and we shall find no Sensual Entertainment half so Quick and Relishing ; our Understandings will be hereby Enlarged and Exalted, our Wills Rightly Byassed and Inclined, our Affections Purified and Refined, and our whole Spiritual Powers Disintangled from the Depraving Profits and Delights of this inferior Animal Life, and Refreshed with new varieties of a lively prospect into the Joys Celestial, which are Pure, Sincere, Holy, and Intellectual !

Let

to the READER.

Let us then in frequent Solemn Meditation on the Divine most Amiable Perfections, (the very Life and Employment of Angels) become more exact Representations of the Divine Purity and Holiness; Let us Spiritualize our Minds, Recalme our Passions, Deaden and Suppress our Appetites to all Earthly Poms and Vanities, and then neither this World's Honours, Profits, or Pleasures shall seduce and soften us, nor shall its Changes and Mischances Grieve and Disquiet us; but being Exalted in our Devout Conversation to Regions whither the Storms and Tempests of this Lower State never reach, we shall enjoy an undisturbed Peace and Tranquillity, nay a delightful Enravisment of Mind while Living; and when we Dye, shall go whither our Pious Thoughts, Holy Desires, Zealous Endeavours, Fervent Prayers, and Grateful Thanksgivings went before to prepare us
Man-

THE PREFACE

Mansions, even into the Heavenly Jerusalem : Of which, that we may be all Inheritors, is the Hearty Prayer of him who earnestly desires thy Spiritual and Eternal welfare.

L. Smith.

Conver-

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Conversation

Conversation in Heaven.

BEING
DEVOTIONS;

Consisting of

MEDITATIONS and PRAYERS.

Meditation I.

*On the Vanity, Vexation and Contempt
of the World.*

THE World! How poor, and mean, and empty a thing! Those sure who understand it well, can never dote upon it; for how should they dote on a Scene of Folly and Vanity, of sickly perishing Delights, which wither in the use, and dye away in the Enjoyment? Nay which

which soon turn into loathing and detestation ; we growing weary of what we have long possess'd, and nauseating a frequently repeated pleasure, tho' at first it was never so Relishing.

The World ! A place of perpetual Snares and Temptations to sinful evil ! A State of interchangeable Joys and Regrets of Mind ! Of Felicity in shew and appearance only, and of Adversity in solid Substance and Reality !

The Vanity and unsatisfactoriness of this World, and of all the things which are in it, is evident from our shifting and changing our Enjoyments ; one while addressing our selves to this object of Gratification, soon after to another : For had we found satisfaction in former pleasures, what need of our removal and application to New ones ? Certainly this desultory change of pleasure, this frequent Range from one Earthly Delight to another, even in those who enjoy most of this World, shews that long enjoy'd pleasures tire, and cloy,
and

and nauseate, that none are truly great and satisfying, that all are vain and empty ; that this our making fresh experiments of sublunary Happiness, is like a sick Man's turning himself from one side of his Bed to the other, whereby indeed he demonstrates his great uneasiness, but finds little or no Relief or Remedy : Vanity is an inseparable ingredient in the composition of all Earthly Good things, to prevent the vanity of our Affections in inordinately coveting and doting upon them.

Alas 'tis Fancy and high-rais'd Conceit, sets a value upon things Temporal, more than any Intrinsic real excellency which is in them : We are fain to make up in gay and pleasing Imagination, what is wanting of solid worth and beauty in Worldly Possessions ; and this way to put a Deceit upon our selves, thereby to hide the Deceit and Vanity of the Creature.

Our desires are too wide and large for their present Gratifications ; and
though

though we frame to our selves glorious Conceptions of pleasure at a distance, could we arrive to such or such a wish'd for Condition, yet our actual Enjoyment of the same evidences our too great opinion of it in remote prospect, and our opinion of it decaying, we afterwards become as weary thereof, as before we were eager in its pursuit.

Those men sure must have little narrow Souls, must have experienc'd and made proof of little, must have thought and consider'd less, who can make to themselves a Portion and Sufficiency out of what they possess here; who can find any full and lasting Contentment in the things of this World.

For what is our Life, but a tiresome Circulation of mean and trivial Enjoyments? But the living in a Round of Vanity and Impertinency, of Sins and vicious Miscarriages? A Repeating the same dull unfavoury entertainments; therefore unfavoury, because

cause the same, and often Repeated.

Nay we do not only live a constant Return and Circle of Vanity, but of vexation of Spirit also; for disappointment proceeds from the vanity and vexation, from the disappointment of the Creature.

What variety of Sports and Pastimes, of Pleasures and Recreations do men invent and make use of to cause a wearisome uneasie life to slide away the more smoothly and undisturbedly? Hereby deceiving time, and forgetting for the present their former misery and trouble by means of the short Intervals of forced and artificial Divertisements: We are fain to gild over the bitter pill of Life with delightful forethoughts of future Temporal Felicity, to make it the easier swallow'd down at present, and the less ungrateful unto our Palates.

Our Enjoyments here below are seldom pure and unmixt with Sufferings; the very best of them have an
Alloy,

Allay, and to Enjoy with us is only not to be so much Afflicted : If we have one serene Sunshiny Day with respect to our Minds or our Bodies, a succeeding lowry and stormy Season comes next to dash our Mirth and interrupt our Rejoycing ; nay, our Cup of Sweets is usually at the instant of drinking it mingled with Bitters, at least the Consideration of a Wormwood draught soon following after is enough to diminish much of its present sweetness and good Relish.

The Pains and Diseases, the Troubles and Calamities of this Earthly Condition do in abundance of Men share the greatest part of their continuance here, do in most persons equal and come up unto, if not exceed and overballance their Enjoyments ; so that with them, Being and Misery, Subsistence and Sorrow, are but several Names for one and the same thing : And considering the large intermixtures of Affliction and Sorrow in this Valley of Tears, it would not be
worth

worth our while to lengthen out our Lives on Earth, were not this life principally in order to another, were it not a space of Time wherein to fit and prepare our selves for an endless Eternity.

O the Deceitfulness of Pomp, of Honour, of Riches, and worldly Pleasures, those mis-named Felicities! Height and Grandeur of Station, what is it but a gilded burthen, but a splendid encumbrance? A Condition of wakeful Cares, and threatening Dangers. The usual Object of Envy, covetous Desire, and malicious Censure while enjoy'd, and which leaves a man despised, reviled, and hated when fallen from its Elevation! A state 'tis of living in continual noise and stir, of being subject to the urgency of Business, and tediousness of Ceremony; of having little time and leisure to our selves, little privacy and retirement from Company, but being slaves and bondsmen to continual Attendants, to supplicating crowds and throngs of
of

of Addressers, to base fawning Flatterers and Parasites ; all the while we seem the most Free, the most Great, and Absolute over others !

Next, What is Fame and Honour, but popular sound and breath ? A thing so Thin and Airy, that he must have a very *Camelion*-like Temper and Appetite, who can live upon such poor Diet with any great degree of Joy and Complacency ; what is it but a puff of Wind and Vain-glorious Applause from the mouths of Mortals, as fickle and inconstant as the Wind it self ? Honour and Praise, a gaudy Flower it is, often nipt by the Frosts and blights of Emulation, Hatred and Detraction ; a thing whose Foundation lies rather in the Person Honouring, than in him who is Honoured ; what no one ought to value himself upon as 'tis conferr'd on him by another, but as 'tis merited by himself ; that which makes a man no better possess of it, nor no worse when without it.

Riches

Riches ; What are they but an heap of bright and shining Clay ? Which oppresseth with Troubles , while it should ease and recreate ; and usually bends and weighs down the Soul with Covetousness to the Earth : Riches what are they but vanishing Treasures ? Which if not taken out of our Hands by the Fraud, Violence, and Injustice of others, may in time make themselves Wings and fly away from us ; which we certainly must leave at the day and hour of our Death. Riches attended with disquieting thoughts, and brain-cracking Projects in the procuring them, with anxious Cares and Solitudes in the keeping them, with jealous fears and distrusts of losing or being despoil'd of them : The immoderate Love of which is the Root of all evil. That which puts men upon the worst of wicked practices, which pierces their Hearts through with many Sorrows, and finally drowns them in the Gulph of Perdition.

Worldly

Worldly Pleasures what be they? But the joyous sensations of a few moments which Decease as soon almost as born; and which tasted straightway loose their flavour and Relish: Which if dishonest and sinful are likewise hurtful and prejudicial, and very severely paid for by succeeding shame, sorrow and repentance; if innocent and harmless, yet carrying vanity in their Nature; they add also Vexation of Spirit, through a deceit of our Expectations: For how should what is Finite, as all Terrene Comforts are, afford any compleat and settled Satisfaction? Oh no; Absolute and Durable Contentment is not contain'd within the narrow limits of the Creature. Nothing but what is Infinite is proportionate to an immortal Souls Capacity, which are next to Infinite!

O our God, that such a thing of Nothing, or worse than Nothing, of pain, sorrow, and disappointment, as is this World, should take up so much of our Affections as it does;
and

and that Heaven, a Region of the sublimest, sincerest, ever-durable, and most enravishing Delights, should share so little in our Love and Approbation ! Thither, did we mount our Thoughts, our Desires, our Religious Enterprizes, even to the Celestial Mansions above, oh with what Disdain should we look down on this vile inferiour Earth ! How little would it appear in our sight ! Nay, how would it in a manner disappear ; our God, our Heaven, our spiritual and eternal Concerns having pre-ingaged the main of our Affections, and consequently having left little Room for meaner Objects and Entertainments !

We are Pilgrims here on Earth, and therefore ought to have the coldness and indifferency of Pilgrims to its most entertaining Gratifications ; we are strangers here on Earth, and ought on that account to be shy of using too much Familiarity with the World, lest it should ruin and betray us with its wicked Seductions : For
who

who would trust himself too far, who would live careless and unguarded in a Forreign, in an Enemies Country? We are Strangers here ; 'tis so very Little a time we shall continue in this Alien Countrey, that 'tis not worth our while to set our hearts upon it, to learn its Language, or Conform our selves to its Customs and Manners.

We are Citizens of the *New-Jerusalem* which is above, Heirs of an Heavenly *Canaan* ; and shall we basely hanker after the Garlick and Onions of this viler *Egypt*? Can we think this howling WilderNESS-Condition a Paradise of Delights? Or do we account Heaven the End of our Hopes, not worth making it the End of our Pious Labours? Not worth the looking after, or earnest contending for it?

Does a life of Voluptuousness, of too free indulgence unto, or too much Affection for Worldly Pleasure, Honour, or Profit, suit with the Gospel-Duties of Mortification and Self-denial? With a being Crucified to the World,

World, and the World to us in the immoderate Love thereof? With the End of our being sent into it, *viz.* to prepare for our happy going out of it, and for a Blessed Eternity? Does it suit to our profession of a Suffering Religion, suit to the Disciples of a Crucified Saviour? To his Mortified, Poor, and Lowly Example? Who was made perfect through Sufferings and Worldly Renunciations: Does it suit lastly to our Baptismal Vow and Covenant, wherein we solemnly engaged to Renounce the Devil and all his Works, the vain Pomp and Glory of the World, with all covetous desires of the same, and no longer to follow or be led by them? O what Perfidiousness, what Perjury is it after all this to be false to our Christian Profession, false to our Baptismal Vow and Covenant, by becoming Idolaters of Earthly Vanity, following and being led by it; and preferring the things Sublunary,

before those of Heaven and Eternal
Glory !

The Prayer.

O *Most Amiable Divine Majesty ! Give us a lively Transporting Prospect of the Glories of Heaven, give us a prospect of the Enravishing Beauties and Perfections of thine own Nature ; and then how will all Sublunary Poms and Vanities appear dim, and faded in our sight ! How shall we look down with Scorn and Contempt upon them !*

Wilt Thou, O Lord, allow us to Raise our Thoughts to Thee, to Exalt them above this World, and shall we still be Groveling upon it ? Wilt Thou Admit and Accept our weak imperfect Affections, and shall we not do all we can to Elevate our Thoughts, to Spiritualize our Affections for thy Service ? O give us that Victory of Faith whereby we may overcome the World ; that Assurance of Hope whereby we may live above

bove its Corruptions, purifying our selves even as Thou art pure !

Mortifie in us, O Sovereign Excellency, the Love of the World with the Quickning Enflamed Love of thy self ; shew thy Self a Loving Father to us, and it sufficeth ; a Glance of the Light of thy Countenance, is enough to Eclipse all Earthly Splendour : O make us to see the Vanity of all things here below, and then we shall soon discern the Vanity of our Affections in inordinately doteing on them.

Cause us, O Spirit of Divine Grace, to consider how our Blessed Saviour, the Lord of all things, the Lord of Life and Glory, despised and contemned the World ; and certainly after this we cannot continue overvaluing it ! Cause us to have our Thoughts, our Desires, our Conversations more in Heaven, and then shall we be much less fond of this Earth ; for finding our infinitely more valuable Treasures Above, our Hearts, our Affections will be there also.

Make us, O our God, to evidence daily our contempt of this World, by the coldness and indifferency of our Love towards it; by wanting its Enjoyments without Impatience, by possessing them with Temperance and Moderation, and by Loosing them without murmuring and discontent.

Perswade us, O Lord, effectually perswade us that we can never be happy, till we have disintangled our Affections from every empty, unsatisfying, disappointing, and transient Good here below, and till we love Thee above all things; who alone canst fill our desires, gratifie all our wishes; till we despise this World, think lowly of our selves, highly of our God, and are wholly dead and crucified to all Polluting sensual Lusts and Appetites: O come Thou then unto us, O our God; come and satisfie our Souls with thy Fulness, replenish them with thy Likeness in Holiness; and thereby drive out of us all inordinate love for meaner Objects and Gratifications, Amen, Blessed Lord, Amen.

Medi-

Meditation II.

On the Redemption of Time.

THere is no Talent committed to our Trust more precious than Time, it being a season for the making provision for an Happy Eternity, and yet no Trust is there more abused, more profusely squander'd away. We take Time by the Fore-lock in all our Temporal Concerns, laying hold on the first opportunity of well-managing them ; but in Spirituals we defer and delay, and move so heavily about the good husbanding of Time, as if the wheels of our Chariots, of our Executive Powers, our Wills and Affections were taken off ; and Time was rather to be shunn'd and avoided than diligently pursued.

But is This running the Race of Christian Obedience set before us ? Is This giving all diligence to make

our Calling and Election Sure ? Is This Redeeming the Time, because the days are Evil ? Time lies so dead a Commodity on many Peoples hands, that they are glad to get rid of it at any rate whatsoever. The next vain pleasure and divertisement, the next as vain and impertinent Idle-Companion, the next fruitless, silly, or corrupting Spectacle, shall ease them of their spare hours as they call 'em, of their leisure and wearisome seasons : But ah that any time should be accounted spare and vacant, when so much as our Eternal Salvation depends upon it, and we know not whether we shall Live till the next Moment ! Ah that what is the dying Man's Want, should be the well Person's Burthen !

While Living, Time is thought by us too Long and Tediuous, we are hard put to it to spend many of its Hours, while Dying 'tis accounted too short and Transient ; which now is likely to be the truest Judgment, that of the
Living

living or dying man ? For certain that of the Latter : For at the near approaches of Death all false disguises which the Lusts of the Flesh, the Lusts of the Eye, or the Pride of Life had put on things, are pull'd off, and then all things appear in their proper Colours, and Genuine Native Dress.

When Death Stares us in the face, when Time is nigh at an End with us, then we shall know the true value of Time, then to our cost and trouble have far different Sentiments concerning it, than what we have Now; then, oh that Time could be Recall'd, that Time mis-spent could be lived over-again, and be better improved ; how diligent and industrious would we be in its improvement ! But alas these Good Wishes come then too late to be converted into Good Practices ; Death will not be put off, Time will not be Recall'd, and the Man dies despairingly Disconsolate, if not everlastingly Miserable ;

rable; not for that he had no means of Grace, no opportunities of Salvation, but because he made not that Good Use of them as he both might and ought to have done.

Time passes away swiftly, though we idle and loiter; the Minutes, the precious Minutes fly, while we are speaking; we are Now a Moment nearer Eternity, than we were the former one: but are we in a nearer preparation for it? Is there a nearer **Tendency in us to an Heavenly Temper**, the nigher we come to the **Heavenly State**? Or rather grow we not more Earthly Affection'd, the nigher we draw to our bed of Earth the Grave?

Alas the Loss of Time is one of the Greatest Losses in the World, and yet how Light a matter do we make of it? This Life so short, so uncertain, every Moment of it so valuable, and yet that we should live as if it were never to have an End, or

as if we had nothing of Concern to do in it ; How Astonishing is this, what an Instance of Folly and Inconsiderateness !

Blessed God ! That a Pearl of so Great price as an indulged space of Repentance, as an happy opportunity of Salvation, should be cast before Swine, before brutish sensual Worldlings ; should be put into the Custody of those who value it not, who know not how to use and improve it !

The Days, the Months, the years of our Lives are violently born away by the impetuous Torrent of Time ; many, many Days of our Years are past and Gone as to our ever living them over again ; but though past, yet are they not wholly lost and perish'd : They are Registered in God's Faithful Book of Remembrance ; they are there preserved, they are there charged upon us for a demand of their Good Use and Husbandry ; an Account, an Account of them will

one day be required at our Hands: And it will be but a lamentable Account indeed, when all we have to offer for the expence of our Life past will be so much Time spent Idly, and in doing of nothing to any Good purpose; so much spent to a very Bad one, in Riot and Excess, in Chambering and Wantonness; so much in unnecessary Habitual Sports and Divertisements; so much spent in the Devil's Service, and so little in God Almighty's! Ah will such an Account, think ye, pass our Great Auditor's Examination? Will such an Account procure our Discharge and Acquittment?

What a strange perverse folly is it in us to complain our Life is short, and yet to render it far shorter, by letting much of it lye Fallow and unimproved? To complain our day time here is quickly spent, and our Night of Death is near at hand, and yet to invent Arts to lavish this short Remainder of Life, and then to lament

ment its being so soon past away and we are Gone ? But if we would lengthen time, let us leave off complaints, and fall to the work of improving it ; let us beside the ordinary Returns of Publick Religious Worship at set appointed Seasons, be frequent and fervent in our private Domestick Devotions ; let us allow to Religion and the exercises of Vertue, some of those Great shares of Time which we call spare Hours ; which we trifle away in vanities and impertinencies, in pleasures and recreations, in fruitless Visits and Complements ; which we spend viciously in Luxury, Riot, and Intemperance, or which we suffer to lye waste without any Employment at all : 'Tis a vast work a man may do, if he never permits himself to be Idle ; 'tis a huge progress he may make in Vertue, if he never stops in the way through Carelessness, or never goes out of his way by wilful and presumptuous sinning : Strive to improve all your
Time,

Time, strive to suffer none of it to pass unaccountable ; and this will be to Redeem it, this will be to compensate for its shortness, for its uncertainty, and Irrevocableness.

We cannot begin too soon to live well, and yet do we demur about it? Had we set upon the work of Religion much earlier, we should have had none to spare ; all would have been little enough, whereby to have evidenced the sincerity of our Faith, and Hope, and Trust ; of our Love to God and his Commandments ; whereby to have secured an Interest in his Favour and Acceptance, and in his free Gift, Eternal Life : For Heaven cannot be over-purchased, we cannot do too much for such a far more exceeding and endless weight of Glory ; and the more we do in Holy Services, the Greater in all Likelihood will be our future Recompence of Reward.

By

By instantly beginning to live well we shall render the work the easier, shall be better disposed to it our selves, and shall have less to Repent of and Reform ; but the longer we delay Redeeming our time, the Greater and more Difficult undertaking shall we find it when we set about it : Every man has his Religious Task appointed him at his coming into this World, to discharge before his Going out of it ; and each day has its peculiar Godly work and business assign'd it ; wherefore if we imprudently omit the proper employment of this day, we shall have so much the more to do to morrow ; both this days Religious work, and to morrow's also : Since then sufficient unto its own day is the vertuous Task thereof, let us not through our present Omissions double and multiply our future pious Pains and Labours ; encrease by delays of Redeeming Time, our work of Salvation, and diminish at the same instant our

our strength and ability to perform it with : So much Time as we have lost in the neglect of Piety and Virtue, so much have we lost of our increase of future Happiness, and of our weight of Eternal Glory ; and can we be content to loose yet more of it ? Can we be content through our mispence of Time to hazard the whole of Everlasting Blessedness ?

Time present is our only state of Trial and Probation ; the After-Life determines our Condition to either Everlasting Happiness or Misery ; and therefore we ought to improve to the utmost instant Opportunities, and to work out our Salvation to Day, while 'tis call'd to Day : For our Religious Work is large and difficult ; the putting off a whole Body of Sin, the putting on the whole Armour of Righteousness ; the subduing old evil habits, a contracting by the Grace of God in Conjunction with our Endeavours, new Vertuous habits ;

habits; the improving them into a Second Nature, into a participation of the Divine Nature and Likeness: All this we have to do in the short space of our Mortality, in a Life but a Span long; and therefore ought to supply our Poverty of Time by its frugal Well-management, and by the Intensity of our Affections and Services God-ward: Making up in Industry and Zeal, what we want in Time; and obeying God universally, cheerfully, fervently and constantly unto the End.

But oh the quite contrary Practice of the Generality of the World! who are forward to improve every thing but Time, which most of all requires improvement; who pursue eagerly every Advantage, but the Highest one, their Eternal Salvation: Ah doubtless he is unworthy of Eternal Life, who seeks it not diligently, as for hid Treasure; who lives not to God and his own Soul: Certainly
he

he is unworthy to win the Prize of Heavenly Glory, who runs so carelessly, as if he matter'd not whether he obtain'd it or no! All that Time is but wasted, whereof no part is spent in the Concerns of Religion.

The Prayer.

O Eternal God, who wast before all Time, and shalt continue to be when Time shall have an End, in whose hands are the Issues and Disposal thereof; seeing time past cannot be Recall'd by us, cannot be lived over again, Grant that we may Redeem it, by a double diligence and improvement of the Remaining Season.

We improve, O Lord, every thing else, O give us Grace to husband well our Time also; we put out our Moneys to Interest, we Till and Manure our Grounds, we watch and make our best of every opportunity of growing Rich; O cause us likewise to put out the precious

cious Talent of Time to Interest ; cause us to Till and Cultivate our Souls, that they may fructifie with saving Graces ; make us to be intent upon and manage to the best opportunities of growing wise unto salvation , of becoming Rich in Faith and Good Works : Convince us that unless we Redeem Time, the Redemption purchased by our Saviour will nothing avail us ; Convince us that Time is the only season wherein to make provision for a blessed Eternity. O may the dying man's wish, the dying man's Good Resolution, more Time, better improvement of it, might it be afforded him, be the study of us Living men, be our most constant care and exercise.

Give us to consider, holy Father, what one of the damned would give but for one more of those Probationary days, which we squander away without any due regard or vertuous improvement ! Give us to consider that the abuse or neglect of Time, will occasion us if persisted in, a sad and mournful Eternity ;
full

full of bitter Regrets, and stinging
Self-condemnations !

*Ah, gracious God, do we live upon
Moments ? Is each minute's Preserva-
tion a kind of Creation, and yet do we
make light of, and trifle them away ?
Ah wretched Triflers with our own
safety and Everlasting Salvation !*

*Convince us, convince us, good Lord,
that the Day-time of our Lives is far spent,
that the short Remainder is hazardous
and uncertain, that the Night of Death
may be nigh at hand, and let these con-
victions cause us to walk as Children of
the Day, not in the evil works of Dark-
ness, but in employing well our Time
and other Talents, that we may not fall
into the condemnation of the slothful and
wicked Servant. O suffer us not to fold
our hands to sleep in the midst of so
many and great spiritual Dangers where-
with we are encompass'd ; but make us
to be intent on all Religious opportuni-
ties : Since our days, O Lord, are but
few*

few upon Earth, cause us by walking
circumspectly to Redeem the time, that
they may not be Evil likewise, or unpro-
fitable.

Are, holy Jesu, Death and the
Grave, Judgment and Eternity not far
from us ; and yet are we far from being
ready prepared for them ? Live we, as
if we were to live always ? As if this
was the only life, and no future one to
be expected ? O cause us to shake off this
our careless security ; cause us to give all
diligence to make our Calling and E-
lection sure.

May the time past of our lives suffice
(ah far too much was it !) to have been
mis-spent in sin and vanity ; wherefore for
the time to come make us industrious
and always abounding in the work of the
Lord, for as much as we know that our
Labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.
O Grant that every moment of time pre-
sent may be precious unto us ; because
the Interests of our precious immortal
Souls

Souls depend upon it ; make us so well to improve Time, as that it may be the securing unto us of an happy Eternity. Amen, Amen.

Meditation III.

On the Folly and Danger of deferring Repentance.

TO delay present Repentance in hopes of future Conversion, is alike imprudent, as for a sick Man to neglect the present use of Medicines, in hopes of future Health and Recovery ; whenas by his neglect of Remedies, he in all probability renders his Distemper desperate and incurable !

To delay Amendment and continue in Sin, with intent of quitting it hereafter, is to wound our Consciences with the stings and remorses of Guilt, on purpose of healing them again

again some time hence : 'Tis to refuse to do what is in our power, and to defer the doing it till it may be out of our power ; 'tis to make our future work of Repentance much greater, more grievous and difficult than it would be at present, and yet to hope to set about it more Advantageously in time to come : 'Tis to increase our Task, to lessen both our Will and Ability to perform it with, and yet to think to perform it better under these Disadvantages!

To defer Conversion, is to persist becoming vain in our Imaginations, erroneous in our Elections, corrupt in our Performances, that afterwards we may become Wise, and retract with Bitterness of Self-condemning thoughts, our former vain Judgments, wrong Choices, evil Practices ; that we may upon change of Mind, Will, and Affections, call our selves fools a thousand times for our former wicked goings astray ; and may be ashamed of, may abhor and grieve for

34 *On deferring Repentance.*

for our past Impieties, as much as ever heretofore we loved and delighted in them ; all these Absurdities and Foillies Delay of Repentance implies ! 'Tis a refusing to become well, and safe, and happy at present, and a referring our spiritual Welfare, our everlasting safety and happiness to the hazardous uncertainties of Futurity !

But do we act thus imprudently in other Affairs of far lesser moment ? No certainly ; when Sick, we delay not the use of means for our Recovery ; when Maim'd or Wounded, we apply our selves immediately to a Cure ; but when sick with Sin nigh unto death Eternal, when wounded in Mind by the Rebukes of Guilt contracted, and maimed in all the Faculties of our Souls by the disorders of Impiety, so that from the Crown of the head to the sole of the feet there is no whole part in us ; yet here we hug our Distemper, seem unwilling to be cured at present, and defer

defer the healing remedy Repentance, till some further season : but ah that we should be so wise and provident in Temporals, and so careless and inconsiderate in Spirituals ! Ah that we should be so much concern'd for the Body, and so little for the Soul !

Oh that men should judge it too early to become instantly secure of endless Salvation ; when they are not secure of living till to morrow, till the next moment ! Vain inadvertent Wretches ! That they should be daily a dying, hourly subject to Death, and yet promise themselves some years hence the making sure of Eternal Life ! Certainly they know not what it means, of what value and importance it is, that they thus stupidly neglect it !

Ah can they think God will lengthen out that Life which is a design'd Course of Audacious Defiance and wicked

36 *On deferring Repentance.*

wicked Rebellion against him ? Ah can they think he will so unweariedly wait to be Gracious unto them ? Alas they consider not what Bonds and Fetters an Evil Custom puts upon the Soul ; how frequent Acts of doing wickedly improve into a confirm'd habit, and an habit of Impiety becomes a second Nature, almost unrelinquishable ; and yet do they imagine they shall be freer to break loose from Sin after a long-continued Bondage thereunto ? That their Chains of Iniquity will be the easier shaken off, after they are Rivited by Custom and Inveteracy of wicked Practice ?

Can we make too much haste to be Saved ? To get out of a state liable to Eternal Death and Condemnation, into a state of Divine Grace and Favour ? Are our Minds, Wills, and Affections likely to be softer, more melting and impressible with the sorrows of Repentance, after they

they are Harden'd through the Deceitfulness of continued sinning? Will God's Grace the more abound towards us, the more we abound in Transgressing against him? What Surety hast thou, impenitent Delayer, but thy day of Grace may be ended before the day of thy Life? But that not Believing and Repenting at present, hereafter may be too Late? He that Believeth and Repenteth not (says our Saviour) is condemned Already. The Irreversible Sentence may be Pronounc'd on thee here, though Executed in another World.

Repent Hereafter? Why, dost thou consider what Hereafter means? It imports the utmost Hazard and Uncertainty: In reckoning on Futurity, thou reckonest on a thing out of thine own Power, and only in God Almighty's Disposal; for the Grace of Repentance (as all other Graces) is the Divine Gift; and He

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who

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who has promised pardon to the Penitent, has no where told us we can be penitent when we Please : On the contrary God has inform'd us, that 'tis his Spirit which works in us both to Will and to do of his Own Good pleasure ; and canst thou think he will work it, though never so long Resisted in the endeavour ? That his Divine Patience will never be tired, the Treasures of his Long-suffering be never exhausted ?

The Holy Scripture indeed tells us God waits to be Gracious, but how Long he waits we are not acquainted ; on the contrary it is written, *My Spirit shall not Always strive with man. To Day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near.* What can be the meaning of these places of Sacred Writ, but that if we neglect this present Accepted time, hereafter may be an unacceptable one? but
tha

that if we hear not Now God's Voice calling us to Repentance, he may hereafter refuse to hear our Voice calling to him for Grace, Mercy, and Acceptance? But that if we neglect the instant Season of seeking the Lord while he may be found, and calling upon him while he is near; there may and will come a time when he will not be found, a season when he will be afar off with his Divine help and Assistance; and when (as holy *David* says) in the great water-floods, in the time of our bitterest Distress and Calamity we shall not come nigh him. Read *Proverbs* the First, the 28 and 29 verses.

God despises that Death bed Repentance, when men leave sin merely because sin must leave them; because they can keep that and the World no longer; when being by constraint a going hence, they desire to go unto God, rather than into the

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place of Torments prepared for the Devil and his Angels : But no imposing upon Omniscieny : The searcher of Hearts sees that such a forsaking of sin is forced, imperfect, flowing from no right Principle, and therefore he values it not.

Ah there is a time when God leaves sinners to themselves, when they will not by any means be perswaded to leave their sins ; There is a certain measure of God's Grace and of man's Impieties, after which the Holy Spirit withdraws himself, and will not any longer be entreated : And how knowest thou, persevering Impenitent, but that if thou neglectest Grace and the season thereof Now, the measure of thy sins may hereafter be compleated, and both thy allowance of Grace, and the opportunity of making use of it, may be over with thee ? Which God grant that it may not be. *Amen.*
Amen.

The Prayer.

MOST *Merciful Father, Patient and Long-suffering, who waitest to be Gracious, and yet whose Spirit will not always strive with obstinate impenitent sinners; dost Thou, O Lord, call unto us, Behold Now is the Accepted Time, behold Now is the Day of Salvation, and do we cry to morrow is soon enough, some Days or Years hence will be as Acceptable a time as this present one? Ah Mad-men that we are! Ah foolish Self-deceiving Creatures! who should know best the Day of our Salvation, Thou our God, the Author of it, or We? Who should know best how Long thy Spirit will strive with us? How Long Thou wilt wait to be Gracious? O cause us to Day, while 'tis call'd to Day, to hear thy voice, and not harden our hearts against thy Invitations to Repentance.*

Convince us, blessed Lord, in order to a present amendment, that 'tis some degree of hardening our hearts, not to hearken to thy Voice this Day; That every continuance in sin is one Advance more towards final Impenitence; a rendering our future Conversion the more Grievous and Difficult, and our Confirmation in wickedness the Greater and nearer to irretrievable: And in a sense of all this, make us we beseech thee, to 'Retire out of the ways of Iniquity immediately.

For would we be willing to be surprized by Death, Judgment, and Eternal Torments in an Impenitent State? Would we be willing to be summon'd before thy Judgment-seat to give an Account of our Stewardship, before our Accompts are duely Stated and made up? If we would not, O canse us then to give all Diligence at present to make our Calling and Election Sure; to work the Religious work for which we were sent into this World, while 'tis Day,
 before

before the Night of Death cometh, wherein 'tis impossible to work out our Salvation.

Is there, Lord, any one of us but would willingly Repent and turn unto Thee sometime before he Dyes ? because otherwise he knows he cannot be saved ; but who of us can be sure he shall Repent before Death, that delays the work till to morrow ? For who can tell what a Day may bring forth ? Cause us therefore, Gracious God, to live every day as if it were to be our last, for that we know not but it may be such ; Cause us to live so at present, as we shall wish we had done when we come to Dye : O grant we may not Dye with any Guilt upon our Consciences, or any known sin unrepented of ; Grant that we may not put far from us the Evil Day, and thereby flatter our selves into a state of impenitence and endless Destruction ; but give us Grace to use well the means of Grace, and improve the opportunities of Salvation, while they are mercifully

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fully afforded us; lest we provoke thee our God to swear in thy wrath, that such obstinate sinners shall never enter into thy Rest.

Let, holy Father, the uncertainty of the time of our Saviour's coming to Judgment, either to the universal one, or that of each particular person soon after his Death, make every one of us live in a continual Readiness and Preparation for it; that we may not have our Oyl of Grace to seek, our Lamp of an holy Conversation to Trim and Replenish, when we should enter in with the Bridegroom of our Souls, Christ Jesus, into his Marriage-Feast : But grant that at what Season soever our Lord comes to call us to an Account of the Talents committed to our trust, he may behold all our Debts to his Divine Justice ready Cancell'd, by our Repentance, through the Merits of his Blood; and finding us perseveringly employ'd in Good Works, he may say unto us, Well done

*done Good and Faithful Servants,
Enter ye into your Master's Joy. Amen,
blessed Jesu, Amen.*

Meditation IV.

*On the Malignity and Evil Nature
of Sin.*

O Sin how common art thou, and
yet how little understood !
How Common, and therefore how
little Dreaded and Abhorr'd ! Did
men consider and understand thee
more, they would sure Love and
Practice thee Less.

Alas they consider not thy direct
opposition to God's Sovereign Au-
thority, Rectitude of Will, and pu-
rity of Divine Essence ; thy contra-
riety to the Laws of Nature, of Rea-
son, and of Grace : How thou art a
Violation of God's Revealed Will
and Pleasure in the Sacred Scrip-
tures ;

tures; Writings which contain nothing but precepts Holy, Just and Good; and which consequently 'tis our greatest Interest and Advantage, as well as Bounden-Duty to observe; and our greatest Disadvantage as well as Disobedience to break and violate.

They consider not, Sin, how opposite thou art to their own Personal Welfare and Happiness, Temporal, Spiritual and Eternal; how Degrading and Defiling to their Souls and Consciences; what an Ignominy and Reproach to our Understandings, what a Violence and Affront to our Reasons, what a perversion and wrong-bias of our Wills and Affections, what a cause of Regret and Disquietude of Mind to those who voluntarily Commit thee; how offensive to God, how injurious to Man, how prejudicial to the Common Order, Peace, and Prosperity of the Universe.

What

What an ungrateful Return thou art to the Divine Goodness, Patience, and Forbearance; how thou art an offering despite to the Spirit of Holiness, a Grieving, a Quenching, a total Driving it away from us; a Crucifying afresh the blessed Son of God, a Treading him under foot, and accounting the Blood of the New-Covenant an unholy thing; a Rejection of all the Merciful Terms and offers of Gospel-Reconciliation, a rendering the means and instruments of begetting Grace in us, ineffectual; a choosing Death, Eternal Death, rather than Life, Eternal Life; a wilful Treasuring up of Wrath against the day of Wrath and Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of a provok'd offended Deity!

All this, and much more, the Commission of known voluntary Sin implies; and can we be so irrational, so Vile, and Dis-ingenuous, so even like Beasts before God, as to continue practicing

practicing vicious Impurity with Greediness, after having thus weigh'd and consider'd, how Evil, how bitter, and Lothsom a thing it is? Oh is there no knowledge, no understanding in the Workers of Impiety, is there no Shame, no Fear, no Regard in them to their Everlasting Salvation, that they drink down Iniquity like Water, and Rush into the occasions of their own Ruin, into the performance of all Wickedness, as the War-Horse rusheth into the Battle, fearlessly and inconsiderately?

Ah Vice, how stupifying a thing art thou! What a polluter first of our Souls and Consciences, and after long Custom of sinning what a layer of them Asleep? what an hardener of our hearts through thy continued and dayly advancing deceitfulness!

Thou Wickedness art pleasurable indeed in the Act, but alas how transient the Act, how vain and inconsiderable the pleasure! whereas the after-Memory of thee is torment-
ing

ing, and much more exquisite, much more Durable a Pain, than thy vicious Enjoyment was a Delight ! Alas ! How art thou all over Disorder and Irregularity, Madness and Unreasonableness, Shame and Disgrace, Depravity and Corruption ! How dost thou render the practicers of thee the Objects of God's curse and hatred, who is otherwise the most kind and benign being ; for God who is Love it self, Love in the very Abstract, does however infinitely hate the Sinner, hates him even unto Death Eternal !

O the Guilt, the inexpiable Guilt of sin unrepented of, that nothing less than an Eternity of punishment is its Recompence ; that it shall ever be Attoning for, and yet never be Attoned ; that the precious blood of Jesus, as infinitely satisfactory as it is, can yet never quench the infernal flames to which sin unforfaken exposes us !

Ah

Ah did men but thoroughly understand the Evil Nature of Sin, the baseness, the turpitude, the Disingenuity and Ingratitude thereof, the Greatness of that Everlasting Vengeance, to which it renders Sinners obnoxious, the full import of Damnation, Damnation occasioned through Neglect of so great Salvation as that the Gospel offers us, no Temptation sure would be big or prevalent enough to entice them to the wilful commission of Impiety, but they would reject it with the same holy scorn and abhorrence, as *Joseph* did the impure solicitations of his *Egyptian* Mistress, crying out, How can we do this Great wickedness, and sin against God, our Heavenly Father? How can we do this great wickedness, and sin against his Son our Saviour's most plenteous and merciful Redemption? against the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier's most kind, and earnest, and often repeated Strivings with us to bring us to repentance?

Who

who (wou'd we suffer him to do it, did we not resist him by sinning) would seal, would Confirm and Establish us in Grace unto the Day of Redemption !

'Tis observable that St. *Paul* describing the odious and heinous Nature of sin, knew not better what to call it than by its own filthy impure Name, sinful sin ; that Sin, says he, might appear sin ; and sin by the Commandment appeared exceeding sinful : Any other Name than its own had been too Good for it, any other than its own would have seemed to have Lessen'd its evil Quality.

There is nothing in the Creation Irregular and Deformed, but as Sin has defaced and brought a Curse upon it ; Sin the Reverse to all that's Great and Good, Praise-worthy and Honourable ; the bane and Disorder of Universal Nature : That which turned Angels of Light and Glory into Angels of Darkneſs and Confuſion ; changed their once happy and
pure

pure Beings into the unhappyness and impurity of Devils ; which expelled Mankind out of Paradise, expelled them at once out of a state of Innocence and felicity : Sin , that which exposed us to Sickness, Misery, and Death Temporal of the Body, to Depravity of mind, Disorderlyness of Appetites, perturbation of passions, and the Spiritual Eternal Death of the Soul !

'Twas fatal impiety and transgression which turned a fruitful *Eden* into a barren Wilderness, turned the Garden of God into a Seed-plot of Temptation for the Devil ; Subjects the Creature unwillingly to bondage and Corruption, makes it Groan earnestly for a Deliverance, for the Renovation and Restitution of all things, when there shall be no more pain, Sorrow, Sickness, or Death ; because no more sin the occasion of them ; no more Bodily Evil , because no more mental and moral evil.

Sin, 'tis the great Malady and Distemper of the Soul; the destruction of its health, beauty, vigour, and Safety; that which puts it into a preternatural temper, puts all its powers and faculties out of order, renders it enflamed with violent passions, Sick with inordinate appetites, tortured with various and contrary desires; and is it not madness to be in Love with such our Disease? To hug and Retain so much Spiritual Sickness and infirmity?

Sin is also the Death of the Soul; the Death of it to the Life of Grace and Vertue; the Death of it to the Quickning influences and Renewing Efficacy of Gods Spirit; the Death of it to any pleasing sense, and Grateful Relish of Divine and Heavenly Good things; and is it not the highest imprudence to be Jocund and Merry amidst a Dying condition? Nay to be Dead, actually Dead stupid, and benumbed in Sins and trespasses, and yet Alive, delighted

ted in, and well-pleased with such our calamitous estate ?

Sin is likewise the most abject Slavery of the Soul, that which renders us the Servants of Corruption ; a Slavery of it to impure lusts and vices, to Tyrannous evil customs and habits, to the over-ruling Temptations of the Devil, who leads wilful sinners Captive at his pleasure : And is it not folly to be Gratified and Contented with such a Servile state, with such a base and loathsome Drudgery ?

Sin 'tis opposite to all God's glorious Attributes and Perfections ; for if we consider his Sovereignty of Dominion, Sin is Disobedience and Rebellion ; if his Wisdom, 'tis Folly and Madness in contradicting it ; if his Power, 'tis Impotency in vainly defying it ; if God's Justice is respected, Sin is Iniquity ; if his Goodness and Forbearance, 'tis Disingenuity and Unthankfulness ; if his Holyness and Purity,

Purity, 'tis the Greatest Pollution and Degeneracy ; if his Truth and Veracity, Sin is Falsehood and Error ! So that Sin being contrary to the pure and holy Nature of God, which is the Original Pattern and Standard of all good ; Sin consequently must needs be the Top, the Abstract and Epitome of all Evil : And ought such a thing to be the Object of our Choice, of our Love and Approbation, of our practice and prosecution ?

Sin contains in it the very formal Nature of Hell and future punishment ; for what makes Hell ? What but the Hellish , that is, the wicked impure tempers and dispositions of the wretches inhabiting it ? which evil tempers of mind would prove their unhappy owners internal Torment and Disquietude, were there no External Lake of fire and brimstone, of avenging flames and utter Darkness.

Nay

Nay Sin is not only the principal and constituent part of Hell, but also a much worse and far Greater Evil than Hell it self; for Hell is Good for something, to take vengeance on the finally impenitent and disobedient, and thereby to vindicate God's Justice and Holiness, but sin serves only to abuse his Grace and Goodness; Hell was of Gods making, Sin of the Devils: Nay Hell was made in pitty to Mankind, to deter them from coming into that place of Torments, but Sin offers violence to Hell, as if it were the seat of Happiness; forces open the Gates of that Infernal fiery Furnace, dragging men into it much against the Will and Rescuing Endeavours of their Creator, Preserver, Sanctifier and Redeemer!

O Sin, where is thy profit? when as thy Loss is that of our immortal Souls! that of Heaven, of peace of Mind, and Joys in the Holy-Ghost

un-

unspeakable and full of Glory !
Where thy pleasure ? when-as thy
Torment is that of a guilty disquiet-
ed Conscience, that of continual dread
of Divine Punishment, that of short
empty Delights, and after vexatious
Reflections on them ; that of an
Afflictive sense of having no Lot
or Portion in the Love and Enjoy-
ment of God, an infinite Good !

Sin must needs be the greatest E-
vil, the worst of any thing which is
Enemy to either God or Man ; be-
cause 'tis God's usual method to pu-
nish sin with sin, when all his other
Reclaiming Essays of Providence
have through the obstinacy of the
sinner proved ineffectual ; I will
chuse their delusions, says God, and
give them over to their Iniquities ;
he that is unjust let him be unjust
still ; and he that is filthy, let him be
filthy still : As if to be a Sinner was
misery sufficient ; and no vengeance
for

for Impiety like that of being permitted a continuance therein.

The exceeding Great Malignity of Sin is in nothing more seen than in this, that it cost God more to Redeem the World than at first to Create it ; cost him but the *fiat* of his Will, but a Word's speaking to make it out of Nothing, but stood him at the invaluable Expence of his Son's Blood to Ransom it out of worse than Nothing, a polluted, sinful, self-undone Condition : At God's Creation of the World there was only want and absence of previous matter whereout to make it, no repugnant inaptitude, no contrariety in the subject whereby in the least to obstruct or retard the Divine Efficacy ; whereas in the Redemption of the lost World, there was the deep rooted Corruption of our Nature, inveteracy of Evil Custom and Habit, depravity of Affection, and perverseness of Man's Will to be conflicted with
and

and overcome by God's Spirit, by his holy Word and Sacraments, before the Ransome purchased could be applyed, and made Savingly Effectual : So much more is there in Sin of unconquerableness and Difficulty of subjection than in the most difficult and miraculous material product of an Almighty power !

O let but our thoughts carry us to the places of our Saviours bitter Agonies and Sufferings, and there let us behold him greatly Amazed and sore troubled, Sweating great drops of blood, bowing beneath the weight of his Fathers Displeasure, crying out, Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; and at last suffering on a painful and Ignominious Cross those extream torments both of body and mind ; which the sins of all Mankind had deserved, which none but the Manhood in Conjunction with the Godhead could have undergone, and which were abundantly Sufficient to Expiate the Guilt
of

of the whole world, and of multitudes of worlds, were multitudes really existing: Let us consider our Blessed Lord suffering all this, though without Sin in himself, only because he had taken it on him by Imputation, and by becoming our Surety, bore the iniquities of us all: and then let us, if we can, continue to think so Lightly, so harmlessly of Sin as we do: Here's a sight, our Redeemers Crucifixion, which at once shews his inestimable Love to us, and the mighty Malignity of Sin: in that nothing Less than his precious Bloodshed, that Seal of the New-Covenant, could Atone Divine Justice, and do away the Guilt, the Condemnation of our impieties!

The Prayer.

O Thou immaculate Purity, Thou perfectly holy and Righteous Divine Being, who hast manifested thy Love to holyness, and thy Hatred against

all impiety chiefly in sending thy Son into the World, by his pure Example and by his holy Doctrine to destroy the sinful works of the Devil, and to promote a Life of uprightness; O that those Excellent Graces which shined so eminently in our Saviour may be formed within us thy servants the Hope of Glory; that the life which we henceforth lead in the Flesh, may be by the Faith of the Son of God: Conform us we beseech thee to his Image in Holiness, making us partakers of a Divine Nature.

Ab, blessed Lord, 'tis not the Guilt, 'tis not the Condemnation of sin we so much desire to be deliver'd from, as the foul stain and pollution, as the Reigning power and prevalency thereof; destroy then Vice within us as well with respect to the inward Love and Approbation, as to the outward Act and Performance: While we are in the World preserve us, holy Father, from the Corruptions of the World; suffer not sin to have Do-

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minion

minion over us in any kind, for we are not under the Law, but under Grace; O may thy Grace be sufficient for us; Keep us, holy Spirit, by thy power thorough Faith unto Salvation, Let not Sin Reign in our mortal Bodies, that we should fulfil the lusts thereof; but Grant that thy good Spirit, thy holy Word, and heavenly Graces may bear sway in us and abound.

Turn our Eyes from beholding sinful vanity, and cause thou us to make much of thy Law. O give us to behold more of the malignant Nature of Sin; of the Turpitude, Folly, Baseness, and Ingratitude thereof; and then shall we more thoroughly Grieve, Detest, and Resolve on the abandoning of it.

*Convince us, gracious God, that Sin 'tis the greatest of Evils, and then shall we betake our selves to Thee the greatest of Goods; work in us that Holiness without which we not only Shall not, but also Cannot see Thee the Lord, by reason of
a natural*

a natural Incapacity in us : for Seeing Thee, O divine Object of blessedness, imports Enjoying thee ; a seeing thee with Delight and Satisfaction ; and this we can never do unless we first become Like Thee in Purity, in the holy Tempers and Dispositions of our Souls : O lay in us that Foundation of future Happiness, Grace ; the Hope and Qualification of inheriting Endless Glory !

Lord we are poor, and blind, and naked ; blind as to true saving Knowledge, operative by Love ; poor and naked as to any inherent Acceptable Righteousness of our own ; O let us be cloath'd upon with the Robes of thy perfect imputed Righteousness ; we are Dead in sins and trespasses, O do thou Quicken, do Thou Raise us up to Newness of Life and Obedience : Purge our Consciences from dead Works, that we may henceforth serve more Acceptably thee the Everliving God.

Let our lives be a continual Endeavour of subduing in our selves the Love of Sin, of becoming Enamoured with the Beauty of Holiness, of becoming Like thee therein, more Approved of by thee, and every way such as Thou wouldst have us to be; Cleanse us, O God from all filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit, and cause us to endeavour after the perfecting of Holiness in thy fear: And then Holiness the chief ingredient of Heavenly Happiness being our New-Nature, being the fix'd Temper and Habit of our Regenerate Minds, we shall be both Meet for Heaven, and our Souls will Tend thither as to their proper place, and most desireable state of Enjoyment. Amen, Amen.

Meditation V.

On Watchfulness against Sin and Temptations.

THat this is a Duty, our Saviour teaches us; *Watch and Pray*, says he, *that ye enter not into Temptation*; that ye come not within the reach or first Enticements thereof: And St. *Peter* exhorts, *Be ye sober, be vigilant, because your Adversary the Devil goes about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour.* He watches for our Ruin and Seduction, and therefore we ought to watch for our own preservation; he is diligent to betray us, and therefore it imports us to be very careful that we avoid his treacherous Snares: He walketh about, is never at Rest from attempting our Corruption, seeks occasions, lies in wait to offer

us Temptations; then when he finds us most unguarded, then when he finds our hearts most light and vain, and consequently most liable to entertain his Suggestions : He watches what sinful Allurement is likeliest to take Effect with us, by means of his observing what our General Temper of body most inclines us to, or what our occasional disposition of Mind renders us the most subject to comply with ; and he baits his hook with such a Temptation as is most agreeable to our sinful Inclination, which he hath aforehand discover'd, or at least shrewdly Ghest at ; and therefore it nearly concerns us to Guard our selves against him with Watchfulness ; to keep us from those sins we are most inclinable to, that they gain not the Dominion over us ; to keep us from Constitutional Sins, to which our Tempers byass us ; from those of frequent occurrence, from sins of Infirmary, which being Lesser ones, are on that account less obser-

Observable and Dreaded, and consequently the more Dangerous; to be very careful to avoid the Occasions of sinning, the pre-dispositions, means and opportunities leading thereunto; to shun the very shews and Appearances of Evil: In short, to watch against all Sin and Temptation in General.

There is no Condition of life free from its Enticements to sinning; they are apt to intermingle themselves with whatever we Think, Speak or Act: Wealth and Prosperity is a dangerous Temptation to the sinful Abuse of Divine Blessings into Excess and Wantonness, into Pride and Carelessness, into Forgetfulness of God and our Duty owing to him; and Want and Adversity is a strong (tho' undue) Provocative to Distrust and Diffidence of God's Goodness & presiding Care over us, is an Incitement to Murmuring, Impatience and Discontent with his Providential Dispensations: So that in every state we

are Unsafe and Insecure in every thing Sin lies at the door to surprize and Assault us ; its Snares are spread for us every where, though we are insensible of them, though perhaps for the present they have not in any Gross instance Caught and Entangled us : and when we live thus among vicious Baits and Dangers, always Near, always Expos'd to 'em, ought we not to be extream wary and vigilant ?

Alas, the Partition Line between Lawful and Unlawful is so small and narrow, that the passage from one to the other is but a Step, or rather (if we advert not) a sudden and easie Slip ; The utmost Freedom in things Allowable, is a Bordering on the confines of Disallowable ; nay, not only a Bordering upon what's prohibited, but also an hazardous Temptation thereunto : We must not come Nigh a Pest-house, if we would not be infected with its Contagion.

Temp-

Temptation is indeed the Subject-Matter and Exercise of Vertue ; so far from Moral Evil in it self, that 'tis the Tryal and Improvement of our Graces ; the Tryal of an honest upright Heart, of our sincere Love to God and Goodness, of our resolved Constancy in the ways of Holy Obedience : But however 'tis a perilous proof of our Vertue ; and better be without the Proof, than without our Innocency ; better be out of the reach of Temptation, than by coming in its way, endanger our being over-power'd therewith. Yet since we can never be wholly out of the Reach of Temptation, at least out of a Liableness thereunto, good Reason have we to be continually watchful and circumspect over our Hearts and our Behaviour, that sin through its Deceitfulness Gain not upon us.

For Satan's wicked Allurements, his vicious suggestions could never take hold on us, would never find

Admittance into our souls, were not the way prepared for their Entrance by our evil Lusts and corrupt Appetites, those Foes of our own Household; who like Treacherous false friends in a Besieged Cittadel, set open the Gates thereof in time of Rest and Security, for the Besiegers to enter in at: Let us chiefly therefore have an observant eye over our own Hearts, endeavour our utmost to free them of all impurities, and beg of God that he would cleanse the Thoughts, the Desires of our Hearts, by the Inspiration of his most Holy Spirit; and then we might bid safe Defiance to all the Devils wicked solicitations, to all the Worlds enticing Flatteries.

We are apt to say of Smaller sins, of sins of humane Frailty and Infirmitie, of some Bosom Lust, as *Lot* did of *Zoar*; is it not a Little one, and my Soul shall live? But ah how do we deceive our selves with such vain words!

words ! For can any Sin be Small, which is an offence against an infinitely Great and Glorious Divine Majesty ? which is a violation of an Holy, Just, and Good Law ? can any sin be Small, the wages whereof is Death Eternal ? The Price of whose Expiation was the precious Bloodshed of the Son of God ?

The Distinction of sins into Greater and Lesser ones, is made not in regard that Lesser sins for their matter, are not Great ones in their Evil Quality ; are not great Repugnancies to the Divine Purity, highly displeasing unto God, equally exposing of us with Greater Vices to the Sentence of Condemnation, and to a suffering the vengeance of Eternal fire ; but for that they are Lesser breaches of the Established Order and Harmony of things in this World, Offer Less violence to the checks of our Consciences, are Less offences against the well-fare of our brethren, or smaller injuries to our own Temporal

poral Interests, whether of Mind or Body, of Goods, or Good-Name: However in strictness of speaking Small Sins are of a great Guilt, because more easily Resistible, because the Temptation to them is Lighter, and therefore a compliance with it, is an Evidence of great Degeneracy of Spirit, of an evil Heart within, which chooses sin with Little Bait in great measure for Sinnings sake: The Weakness of Assaults from Lesser Temptations, adds to the inexcusableness of our Cowardice, if we suffer them to vanquish us; and therefore they ought the more unyieldingly to be withstood.

This then being my Duty, watchfulness against all iniquity, against all Temptations, all Occasions tending thereunto, I will by the Grace of God, be very diligent in the Exercise of it: And do thou, O God, strengthen my Purposes, confirm my Resolutions, Assist my sincere Endeavours of Striving against sin, of Resisting all
its

its Allurements, of being brought under the Dominion of none of them : O Lord lead me not, permit me not to be led into Temptation, but Deliver me from all evil, both Moral and Natural, Corporal and Spiritual ; for thine is the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Prayer.

O THOU Divine Supporter of the weak, thou strengthner of such as do stand, and Raiser up of them that fall, beat down Satan under our feet ; we are beset with Spiritual Enemies ; we have no might to help our selves against the Great Company of Temptations which daily assault us ; our eyes are only upon thee, from whom alone cometh our Health and Salvation : Help Lord, or we perish ; help, or we are Ruin'd Eternally ; stretch forth thy Right hand to save us, or we sink in the waves of vicious Allurements, which so impetuously

ously beat against us ; O be Thou pleased to speak those Tempests into a Calm : do Thou either *Restrain* the unruly waters of strife, *sinful Assaults*, which are ready to come in, even unto our Souls : or else *Assist* and bear us up that they may not overwhelm us : Suffer us not O Lord, to be Tempted above that we are Able, but together with the Temptation make a way to escape, that we may resolutely withstand it ; and having done all, may stand.

O make us diligent in all our Duties, watchful against all Temptations, that they never become a snare to catch and entangle us ; but cause us to Resist manfully according to our Baptismal Engagement, the World, the Flesh, and the Devil ; striving against sin, against all wicked Enticements, Provocations, and Opportunities leading thereunto : And in all our pious conflicts makes us more than Conquerors through Christ which strengthens us.

O holy Father, Thou Preserver of men,
the Prince of this world Satan cometh,
he cometh to search and to Try us ; O
Grant he may find nothing in us to close
with his Temptations : keep us from sin,
keep us from every evil way of the De-
stroyer ; Deliver us from all our Ghost-
ly Adversaries, for we fly unto Thee to
secure and hide us : O pluck our feet out
of the wicked Net which they have pri-
vily layd for our souls.

We fly unto thee O thou Refuge of all
those who put their Trust in thee, we fly
unto thee to Repel and Quench all the
fiery darts of the Devil ; let him not
have any Advantage over us, but give
us strength in the day of battle and
holy Contention ; Grant that thy King-
dom may daily Rise, and the Kingdom
of Satan dayly fall in our hearts.

Lord, We wrestle not only with flesh
and blood, with the Corruptions of our
own Nature, but with Principalities
and Powers, with Spiritual wicked-
nesses

nesses in high places; O Give us therefore Power in thee our God; let thy Spirit be sufficient for us, let thy strength be manifested in our weakness, and make us in the conclusion mightily to prevail. Cause us to take unto our selves the whole Armour of God, to watch and pray, to fast and mourn, and strive our utmost against sin and Temptation; that having fought a good fight, and finished our course, and kept the faith, henceforth may be laid up for us a Crown of Righteousness, a Crown which fadeth not away, Eternal in the Heavens. Amen, Amen.

Meditation

Meditation V I.

Against the Sin of Pride.

PRide ! How incongruous a thing to a poor Indigent, Dependant Creature ! To a compound of Vileness and Corruption, of Misery, and Folly ! whose foundation being in the Dust, ought to humble him thither from whence he was taken.

Pride was not made for Man, says *Solomon*, it Becomes better any other part of the Creation ; for they still Retain that beautiful Goodness at first impress'd upon them by their Divine Maker ; the Stormy wind and Tempest, the Sea and raging Floods, as boisterous and unruly as they be, are yet Elements fulfilling God's Word ; The Moon observes her certain seasons, and the Sun knoweth his going down : All Nature keeps its Regular Course at first ordain'd it ; only Man, Irregular
Man

Man has Deviated from his primitive state of Order and Innocence, and thereby has Degraded himself below the very Beasts which perish ; so that 'tis much more a matter of profound humbling to Man that immortal Corruption was his Off-spring, than that Mother Earth, Natural Corruption was the Parent-principle of his formation.

To be proud, and yet to be a Beggar, to live upon Alms ; what a Solecism, what an inconsistency is it ! And yet thus it is with us ; we are Beggars of our dayly Bread from God, or at least should be such, all we possess, all we Are, was Originally from him ; we are his Pensioners and Alms-People : And how insufferable a thing then is Pride in Man, how indecorous ! *What hast thou says the Apostle St. Paul, which thou didst not Receive, and yet boastest thou as if thou hadst not Received it ?* Surely all boasting is excluded, where whatever we have is of Grace, and not of Debit

Debt, is ours in Trust only, not in Propriety!

Ah 'twas this sin of Pride, which first brought sin into the world; which first came into it, and which will Last go out of it: Ambition was as early as Nature, and *Adam* was little sooner a Man, than he Aspired to be as God, knowing Good and Evil: But alas, 'twas this his undue Aiming at so Great a height, which was the occasion of his fall; and he knows now Evil, only by the Loss and Privation of Good!

Pride, 'Twas this turned the Apostate Angels out of Heaven, which made even that infinitely Blissful place uneasy to them, while proudly reaching at the incommunicable Privileges of the Deity, that Aspiring sin changed their Angelick Nature into that of Devils: And 'tis this Vice of pride which is more or less an ingredient in all the wickedness committed

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mitted by degenerate Mankind; for every wilful iniquity is a rejecting the Divine Authority and Sovereignty of God, and a Virtual saying within our selves, Who is Lord over us?

'Tis this sin of excessive Self-Love and too good an opinion of our own Endowments, which includes in it mixture of the greatest folly; for it implies mis-apprehension and Error Ignorance and Inconsideration; Ignorance of those Imperfections and Deformities, Sins and Seeds of Misery within us, which were they discovered must needs humble and abase us.

Ah how troublesome a Guest is Pride in a Man's bosome! it creates both uneasiness to himself and all others about him; while it makes him Envy Superiours, take to Heart the slights of Equals, and even to rage with passion at the Disrespect of Inferiours. O 'tis this vice of over-rating our selves keeps us Strangers

at home, makes us unjust Censurers abroad ; Causes us to think too highly of our own worth, too meanly of that of others ; 'tis this hinders our growing Wiser and Better, our imagining we are wise and good enough already : But alas! did we see all we lack, we should soon fall in our own Conceit, and wish for much more Wisdom and Goodness than we have.

Pride ! nothing more looses a man Friends, and Gains him Enemies ; nothing more renders him an object of universal Scorn and Contempt : so that the proud person by Pride defeats his own Aims ; he challenges Honour as his due, but by unduly challenging it, he reaps Dis-respect and Derision.

But above all, nothing more than Pride renders us the Scorn and Hatred of God ; the Lord beholdeth the lowly with an Eye of Love and Appro-

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Approbation, but the proud he knoweth afar off, *Psalms* 138. *verse* the 6th. Nothing also more obstructs the holy Influences of the Divine Spirit upon our Hearts; *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble, 1 Pet* 5. 5. He has but two Habitations wherein he more especially delights to dwell, Heaven, and the Soul of him who is *of a contrite and humble spirit, Isa.* 57. 15. On the contrary, nothing is more opposite to the Nature of the Deity, or to the Humiliation of his blessed Son Christ Jesus, than Pride and Haughtiness. And therefore our Saviour though the Brightness of his Father's Glory and the Express Image of his Person who thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, yet took on him the form of a Servant; came not to be minister'd unto, but to Minister: appeared in a mean and low condition, that he might teach us Meekness and Lowliness of Heart; the first Good disposition for the Receipt of his

his Self-denying Gospel, and of all Evangelical Graces.

And indeed, What have we poor silly Worms and no Men, to be proud of? What should hinder our Humility? Alas how do Angels so much Rais'd above us in Excellency, Angels who see our Vileness by reason of sinning, how do they both pity and wonder at our Pride! At our Folly of being exalted in our own Conceits above Measure!

They though they much transcend us in Knowledge, in Beauty, in Strength, and all other Endowments both Natural and Moral, yet are they Humble and Modest; they cover their faces before God, and cast down their Crowns at the feet of the Lamb Christ Jesus acknowledging him alone worthy to be prais'd: The sense they have that their Angelick Excellencies however Great and Glorious, are yet Finite, and derived from

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from their Creator ; their sense of his Divine Perfections infinitely surmounting theirs keeps them meek and lowly ; and the Abundance of their Celestial Revelations by this means no way puffs them up, but renders them the more Thankful, the more sensible of God's Goodness unto them. Let Them therefore be our Pattern of Humility ; nay rather let the ever blessed Jesus be our Example herein who has directed us to learn of him for he was meek and lowly, though the most High God !

Ah 'tis but comparing our selves with the Deity, and then 'twill appear how there is no comparison between us ; what vile Creatures and miserable Sinners we are, and what an infinitely Glorious Being, and immaculate Purity is God ! and the sense of his Greatness and Glory will lessen and humble us in our own Conceits. *Amen, blessed Saviour Amen.*

The Prayer.

O THOU King of Glory, who dwellest in the Heaven of Heavens, and yet condescendest to look down from the habitation of thy Holiness on us poor Unworthy Mortals, whose foundation is in the Dust, and our Sojourning in houses of Clay; we beseech thee take up thy Glorious Residence in our Hearts, by banishing thence the sin of pride and Self-conceit; by possessing us with high Reverential thoughts of thy Divine Majesty, which may make us appear Mean, and Low, and Despicable in our own apprehensions: O that we may appear such Now in thy Presence; for that thou Resistest the Proud, but givest Grace, an Increase of Grace unto the Humble; humble us therefore, O Lord, amidst these our Devotions, that thou mayst exalt us in thy due season.

E

Mortise

Mortifie in us at present all Haughtiness of Spirit ; for what more incongruous than Pride, and a Lowly Begging Supplication ? What more incongruous than a Display of our wants, and Acknowledgment of our Vileness and Dependance, an Imploring of Mercy and Relief, (all which import the deepest Humility) and yet a self-conceited, Arrogant, and Lofty temper of Mind ? O grant it may no longer bear Sway over us ; Grant that we may be clothed with Humility, that we may see the imperfections of our best Services. Make us pure in Heart, yet poor in Spirit ; vile in our own Eyes that may be precious in thy sight : Strike us with a deep and lively sense of our wretchedness by reason of sinning ; and make us as Humble, as we are Wicked.

What, O Lord, are all the Nations of the Earth if compared with Thee, the Creator and Supream Governour of all things ? What ? but as a drop of the Bucket, and as the small dust of the ballance ? How may we then justly blas-

with shame, when we consider our multiplied hainous transgressions against so great and glorious a God! when we consider in what manner we lift up our hearts against Thee the Giver of every Good and Perfect Gift, by arrogating to our selves the propriety of thy free beneficence! O make us account our highest Attainments in Humane Knowledge, as Dung and Dross for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord; make us Ambitious of being found in him, cloathed with his Spotless imputed Righteousness.

Suffer us not, O our God, to exalt our selves above measure, by placing undue Confidence in any thing we do, or in what-ever we Suffer for thy Names sake; lest we fall not only from the Stedfastness of our holy profession, but also into the Condemnation of the Devil sinning according to the Similitude of his transgression: O let him not Rule in our hearts by the Disobedience of pride; permit us not to Resemble him in so foul a Vice, which will Deface thine Image

E 2 within

within us ; but teach us to tread in the Steps of our blessed Saviour, and to learn of him who was Meek and Lowly , shall we find Rest unto our souls.

Grant, Holy Father, that in Lowliness of mind we may think meanly of our selves, in honour preferring each other ; that neglecting the praise of men, or making it a subordinate motive in our practice of things vertuous, we may have a principal Regard to the Testimony of a Good Conscience, and may seek in the first place that praise which cometh of thee our God ; O let us be nothing in our own account, that Thou mayest be all in all unto us : Make us to employ all industry and care in Approving ourselves unto Thee, that being Conformed unto our Redeemer in Humility, (who humbled himself unto Death, even the Death of the Cross) we may become thy workmanship O God, ready prepar'd unto every Good work, and may Abound therein without any vain ostentation. Amen, for thy Mercies sake. Amen.

Meditation VII.

Against the Sin of Unchastity.

UNchastity! Ah how small is its
 Temptation, when placed in
 Equal View with the deterring evil
 consequents thereof! For who can
 be allured with Poverty and Begge-
 ry, with Shame and Ignominy, with
 Rottenness and Corruption, which
 are the usual Attendants of impure
 Embraces? Ah to burn in Lust is to
 Anticipate Hell-flames, and to burn
 in uneasy Torments of Mind even in
 this life; for the eager appetite of
 Lust is full of Anxiety and disquieting
 impatience till such time as 'tis Grati-
 fied: Hence the usual terms of ex-
 pressing a violent Amour, are Flames
 and Darts, are Favours and Exsta-
 tick Raptures: And besides the Fears,
 and Dangers, and Dis-Grace of a
 E 3. Disco-

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Discovery in the Unchaste Action, when the beastly desire is Satisfied, then Succeed Dis-satisfaction, Shame and Regret of Mind in a bashful Novice Sinner of this Nature, and worse than Shame and Regret, an hardened Impudence and confirm'd Searedness of Conscience in an old habituated fornicator.

But alas alas, that Men should buy Repentance of unlawful Satisfaction of fleshly Appetites, at the Dear rate of Disease, Torment, and Unsoundness of Body, in Conjunction with Disquietude of Spirit ! Alas that they should purchase so high Eternal Misery, as to incur them for the Dyeing sensual pleasures of a few moments ! Ah where is, I say not Religion, but where is even Reason and Understanding, in such Unclean Persons ! It shews that impure Sense, that the Animal and Brutish part is uppermost in them.

Against the Sin of Unchastity. 91

Ah shall we be Ashamed to Commit Acts of Uncleanness in the sight of Men, in the sight of but a Child ; and yet shall we without blushing Commit them in the sight of an Omniscient God ? Shall not His Excellency make us afraid of any filthyness of flesh or Spirit ? And His dread fall upon us, that we become not Guilty of the same ?

If any Man defile the Temple of God, says St. Paul, him will God destroy, 1 Cor. 3. 17. and he must have little sense either of the Majesty and Purity of God, who will dare to Desecrate his Temple ; or of the Divine Justice and Power, who will hazard his own Salvation thereby !

Alas Unclean Wretch, one would think thou shouldst have more Reverence for the Dignity of Humane Nature, for the Awful and Stupendiously beautiful Structure of thy Body, than to make it the foul instru-

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ment of Lust and Uncleanneſs; that
to take thus the Members of Chriſt
and make them Members of an Har
lot; God forbid Thou ſhouldeſt do
it: Ah doſt thou know what a ſi
is to Grieve, to Reſiſt, to Quench
to Drive from thee in this manner
the Good Spirit of Grace? What
Sin did I ſay? Nay doſt thou know
what a Loſs, what a Prejudice it is un
to thee both Corporal and Spiritual?

While the Holy Ghoſt inhabits the
Temple of a Sober, Pure, and Chaſte
Body, Angels are its Guardians, the
Holy Spirit its Guide, its Defender
againſt all Assaults of Temptations;
but when Unchastity has forced
him from that Abode, and ſent both
Him and our Tutelar Angels Sid
den'd away, then Enters the Unclean
Spirit, the Devil; takes poſſeſſion of
an Impure Body as of his own proper
Right and Houſe of Inheritance, and
the Man lyes expoſed to as many
other Sins and Temptations as will
please

Against the Sin of Unchastity. 93

please to Assail him : For the Fence of Vertue, Modesty being broken down ; Modesty, that Greatest Restraint on Degenerate Human Nature, next to the checks of Conscience, and of God's Spirit, being lost, what should hinder Unchast Persons who have yielded their Members instruments of Uncleanness already, from proceeding to yield them further Servants of iniquity unto iniquity, without any stop or forbearance ?

Oh Unchastity it is a very Stupifying sin ! It Seals a Man up in impenitence, and renders him usually beyond the force of a Reclaimment ; any otherwise than as Disease and Disability of Body prove his Reformers : The Debauch'd Mind within for all that remaining Unreclaimed, but as lasciviously inclined as ever !

Ah for Remedy of Unclean Cogitations and Desires which lead to Corporal Pollutions, and which defile

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the Soul, as much as Unclean Acts do the Body, nay which arrived to a plenary unchaste Consent of the Will, become the Adultery of the Heart, *Matth. 5. 28.* Let us consider how unfitting it is that the Soul and Body which are both the dear purchase of Christ's most precious Blood, should be Debased and Vili-
fied by any Lustful indulged Desires, or Actual uncleannesses, rather let the Remembrance of the blessed Jesus Crucified, Crucifie in us all sensual appetites of the flesh; let the Remembrance of Everlasting burnings Quench and Extinguish in us the fire of Concupiscence! Let the fear of God make thy flesh Tremble, and so Awe it into Subjection, that thy fleshly lusts may not at any time war against thy Soul, and gain the Victory.

Think, Think each hour on the mortifying Considerations of Death, Hell, and the Grave; on Rottennes
and

Against the Sin of Unchastity. 95

and Putrefaction therein; and on thy Appearance at the General Resurrection before the Tremendous Majesty of thy Judge, who is of purer Eyes than to behold impurity with Approbation; and this will suppress in thee lustful thoughts and wishes even in their Infancy and first motions: Be alwayes busied in some lawful Employment, and then Satan when he comes will find no Share in thee, no Room for his unchaste Temptations to Enter; no impure matter within for their setting fire thereto, and Exciting it into a flame of Desire, Consent, or Unclean Action. Observe but Sobriety and Moderation of Dyet, joyned with Prayer and occasional Fasting, and thou shalt soon observe how all Carnal Appetites will dye and become vanquish'd within thee.

Yes, I will endeavour, do Thou O my God, Assist me thereunto; I will endeavour by the strength of thy
Grace,

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Grace, to Conquer all Temptations, all the least Tendencies to this vice of Unchastity ; I will suppress the first unclean Fancy with loathing and indignation ; I will stifle the first impure Desire after Satisfying my undue Sensual Appetites ; I will Fly and not Fight ; I will keep out of the way of Unchaste Allurements , rather than Try and hazard my Chastity by Resisting them ; I will Escape out of the filthy *Sodom* of impure Cogitations, without looking back, or so much as Revolving them in my mind : My Mortifications, my habitual Mortifications and Temperance shall shew, how much I abhor to Gratifie the flesh into Rebellion against the Spirit ; I will Quell Concupiscence in its Primeval Origine ; for the very Entertaining of foul Thoughts, though they proceed no further, is an Abomination before God, a Repugnancy to his Unspotted Purity, and a dangerous Temptation or prædisposition to go on to more Advanced degrees
of

Against the Sin of Unchastity. 97

of Unchastity : I will therefore by the help of my God abstain from all manner of Impurity , External and Internal , Corporal and Spiritual : *Amen, Blessed Jesus, Thou Author and Pattern of all Purity and Holyness, Amen, Amen.*

The Prayer.

O Holy Jesu, immaculate Lamb of God, Prince of Purities, Captain of Salvation to all those who have kept themselves pure and unspotted with the World and the Flesh, keep us pure, keep us sober, chaste and modest in all our Deportment ; Create clean hearts, O God, and renew right Spirits in thy Servants ; that we may dread all impure Thoughts, all polluting Desires, all corrupt Communication ; much more may fly all Actual compliances with fleshly Lusts which war against the Soul : O let no impure Imaginations pollute our Spirits, which God hath sanctified ; no immodest, obscene Speech pollute

pollute our Tongues, which God hath commanded to be Instruments of his Praises; no unchaste Actions rend the Veil of those Temples our Bodies, which the Holy Ghost hath chosen for his place of Worship and Residence: Make us such a Remove from all uncleanness of the outer Man as to hate the very Garment spotted with the Flesh; as to become Resemblance of Angelick Purity: as if we were not cloath'd on with Rayment of Mortality, as if whether, with St. Paul, we were in the Body, or out of the Body, it was uncertain!

O Divine Spirit of Purity, thou Author and Preserver, thou Beginner and Finisher of the Grace of Chastity as of all other Good and perfect Gifts, let the Consideration of thy unspotted Purity preserve us from all filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit; and may the apprehension of thine All-seeing inspection who art of purer Eyes than to behold the least Speck of iniquity with Approbation, Awe us into an entire Sanctity.

O our God, how ought we to offer up our Souls and Bodies Living Sacrifices, Holy, Pure, and Acceptable unto Thee, whenas both are the purchases of thy Dear Son's most precious Blood ; both are the Care and Protection of thy Good Providence, the Temples of thy blessed Spirit ; when as both bear the beautiful impressions of thy Wisdom, Power, and Goodness ; both were Dedicated to thy Service in Baptisme, and have frequently since Renewed their Engagement of Renouncing the World, the Flesh, and the Devil : O keep us to the performance of this solemn Engagement ; keep us to a Reverencing of our Humanity, which God hath Dignified by his susception thereof ; keep us undefiled both in Soul and Body.

And wherefore, O blessed Saviour, to what End were we Redeem'd by thee ? But that we should be Redeem'd from all Iniquity, and purified unto thee a peculiar people Zealous of Good Works ;

O

O purifie us thoroughout by thy Spirit, in Soul, Body, and Spirit: May we live no longer after the Flesh, fulfilling the impure Lusts thereof, having a Name indeed to live, yet being Dead unto the Life of Grace; but Grant that mortifying through thy Spirit the deeds of the Body, we may live a life of inward Peace, and Joy, and Freedom from the slavery of serving diverse corrupt Lusts and Passions.

Enable us, holy Jesu, to take up the Banner of thy Cross against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil; to Crucify the Flesh, with its corrupt Desires and Affections; hereby shewing that we are Thine, followers of thee as dear Children in all Purity and Chastity: That so possessing our vessels in Sanctification and Honour, we may lay them down in a pious Hope, and receive them again in a Joyful Resurrection, when the Bodies of Saints shall Rise first, and the Bodies of Virgin-Innocencies with a brighter Lustre and Ray of Revived Glory.

Amen,

Amen, *Thou Resurrection and the Life, Amen.*

Meditation VIII.

Against the Sin of immoderate Anger.

AH did but a furious Angry Person behold himself in the midst of his unrulely Passion, and see his own Blood-shot Eyes, his Distorted Face, his wild Disorders of Countenance, Speech, and Gesture, he would I perswade my self be so out of Love with the unseemly Picture his Anger drew of him, as to fly and abhor it ever after: for 'tis a Passion which for the time is Raging Madness; which puts a man Besides himself, out of his own power and keeping, perverts the Order of God and Nature in our Primitive Constitution; causing Reason that Spark of the Divinity, that at first design'd Ruling

Ruling Faculty of our Souls, to
Crouch and become Obeysant, and
headstrong Lust and Passion to be
Uppermost and Domineer L

Ah how doth impotent Wrath and
Fury debase and vilifie Humane Na-
ture; transforming a man into a
Wolf or Bear, into a Lion or Tyger:
so that with some shew of Reason
did the *Pythagoreans* Fancy a Trans-
migration of such wild and savage
Souls into the Bodies of as wild and
savage Beasts; for how should they
be suitable inhabitants of more calm
and peaceable Receptacles?

And upon account of this Tumult
and Disorder of Soul, which the
Vice of inordinate Anger and other
Passions put us in, the Stoick-Philoso-
pher advises his Wise Man to a
Total suppression and Eradication
of all Passion; that hereby he may
live undisturb'd and at Peace in his
own Bosom: But the Good Christian
abstains

abstains from undue Anger upon higher Considerations; *viz.* for that 'tis contrary to his known Duty, and to the Divine Precepts enjoyning Meekness of Spirit; for that 'tis Displeasing unto God, rendering of us unlike Him who is Patient and Long-suffering; contrary to our Saviour's Calm and Gentle Temper and Behaviour: for that also Anger indisposes a man for Communion with God in Prayer and other holy Exercises, and makes his Soul an unquallified Temple for the Dove-like Spirit of Grace to keep his Residence therein.

For if the Divine Spirit of Prophecie under the Law, (a Law for the Hardness of *Jewish* hearts, less strictly restraining Anger and a desire of Revenge) rested not however on the head of a furious passionate person, at least not till his Anger was over and dislodged; much less can we think that under the state of the Gospel, a more meek and Loving Dispensation, the

the Celestial Spirit of Meekness and Gentleness will inhabit a passionate, malicious, or Revengeful person's Soul : No, 'tis Meekness and Humility, 'tis Good Nature and Slowness to Anger which consecrate our Souls Sanctuaries to that God, whose Sovereign Attribute is Clemency and Goodness ; and our being in a lower Measure endued with this, is that which makes us partakers of the Divine Nature, for God is Love, says St. *John*:

And furthermore, that a violent passion of Anger, or any other inordinate perturbation of Mind, are utterly inconsistent with the Quiet and peaceable Spirit of God (which as it descended formerly on our Saviour in the Shape of a Dove, descends now only on Meek, Dovelike, Dispassionate persons) the sacred Scriptures do plainly and abundantly testify ; for when the Prophet *Elijah* was upon the Mountain *Horeb*, there came

came a Great Strong Wind, but the Lord was not in the Wind; and after the Wind an Earthquake, but the Lord was not in the Earthquake; and after the Earthquake a Fire, but the Lord was not in the Fire: Last of all came a Still Small Voice, an Emblem of Meekness, a Cessation of all former boisterous Commotions, and then was it that the God of Peace, Unity, and Concord was more immediately present, 1 *Kings* 19.11, 12.

A Calm, Joyous, Unmolested temper of mind is a lively Representation of the Celestial state of Blessedness, a fit Preparatory for it, and which makes an Heaven upon Earth to the man who possesses it; but a furious Angry Disposition is all its Contraries.

'Tis an Argument of a weak pusillanimous Spirit which can bear nothing to be in a passion upon every provocation; a sign that the mind is
Galled

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Galled and fretted within ; that the Owner thereof has no Command or Governance over himself, but is rather at the Disposal of others, who can discompose him when they please : But a truly Great and Noble Spirit is Superiour to many Lesser Affronts, and not immoderately provoked by any Greater ones ; he is like the Sublimer Regions of the Air, all Calm and Serene, Quiet and Sedate, while the Lower Orbs, Angry passionate Persons, are full of Storms and Tempests of Rage and Resentment in their bosoms.

Intemperate Anger 'tis the high Feavour of the Soul, the foul Deformity of the Mind, a Shame and Reproach to our Understandings ; That which unfits us for Humane Society, makes us suitable companions only for Wild Beasts, unfits us both for the business of our Civil Employments, and also for the Several Duties of Religion : That which Roils and
fires

fires our blood, corrodes and preyes upon our Hearts, puts into a violent tumult and irregular hurry our Animal Spirits ; and hereby impairs our Health, wastes our Strength, and breaks the firmness of our Constitution.

Passion, 'tis a Disorder of Soul which Ruffles the Smoothness, and disturbs the calm Tranquillity of our Lives ; renders us pityed by Friends, laughed at by Strangers, hated and Reviled by Enemies ; the Condoliment of the former, the Merriment and Scorn of the latter.

Impetuous Anger, Oh how ill-Natur'd a thing it is ! How Envyous (as it were) of Mankinds Happynefs ! For how unquiet does it render a Person to himself, how uneasie and unacceptable to others ! What Mischiefs does it hurry Men into the Commission of, which afterwards occasion their Sorrowful Repentance ?
What

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What foolish Speeches, and unseemly Ridiculous Actions does it draw from those possess'd by it? And no wonder, for 'tis the Drunkenness, the Intemperance of the Mind; and as we say of a Drunkard, when the Wine is in with him, the Wit is out; so may it be said of one Drunk with Passion when That is predominant, then is his Understanding suppress'd in its operations.

How severely was undue passion Reproved by our Lord in his Disciples, who were for calling down fire from Heaven on the inhospitable Samaritans! *The Son of Man* (says he) *is not come to destroy mens lives, but to Save them*: That is, the Gospel Oeconomie which you are under, is a Gospel of Peace and Reconciliation, not a Law allowing Revenge and Retaliation.

Impatient Rage and fierceness. How contrary is it to that God who

is Slow to Anger, who waits to be Gracious; who terms in holy Writ Judgment or Vengeance his Strange work: As if through Desuetude and unfrequency of Executing it, he was grown unacquainted therewith! How opposite also, is ungovernable fury to the Meek and Lowly, the Calm and Dispassionate Example of the Ever-blessed Jesus! who was oppress'd, who was afflicted, yet he open'd not his Mouth, *Isa. 53. 7.* who when he was Reviled, Reviled not again; when he suffer'd, he threatned not, but committed himself to him that Judgeth Righteously, *1 Pet. 2. 23.* Where was Anger, where was the least Tendency towards it in all our Saviours Carriage from the time of his Apprehension to that of his cruel Death and Crucifixion, though Mocked and Scourged, and in the highest Degree Tempted to a Discomposure? And shall not we who profess our selves his Disciples, Copy after his Pattern? Transcribe it in as

F

large

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large a measure as may be into our
Hearts and Lives?

Let us not in Cowardice and Lazyness cry out 'tis impracticable to suppress passion, whenas many Old Testament Worthies have done it, and Gain'd themselves Immortal Renown thereby; whenas we have above all others such an eminent Instance of suppressing it in our blessed Redeemer; when we have such mighty Aids and Assistances of Gods Spirit under the Gospel, whereby to suppress it; when many Heathen who have had no such Illustrious Pattern, no such powerful Assistances as we, have however been famous for this Command over themselves in subduing their passions; of all Victories the Greatest and most Noble. And shall not what was praise-worthy and commendable in them, become a Vertue in us Christians of a much higher Nature? We practicing it according to more perfect Rules agreeably

Against Immoderate Anger. III

agreeably to a more Transcendent Example, and in an higher measure than either *Jew* or *Gentile*; even to the suppression of the first motions toward undue Resentment.

Ah what a foolish vice is Excessive Anger, which creates a man trouble in his mind to no purpose; for what is past and Gone, and therefore cannot be Recall'd or Remedyed; which makes him lose the Enjoyment of what he yet possesses; out of fretful Discontent concerning what he has Lost: Which turns also another Man's Sin, his unjust provocation of me, into my own most severe and smarting punishment; while I fret and fume, and thereby Gratifie my Adversary, in making his reproach or injury done me, work beyond his Agency, and in mine own hands and keeping: This (let me consider) was what he Design'd it for, to Disturb my Quiet and Repose, and therefore fool that I am to suffer my provoker

F 2

voker to have his Intent herein ; fool that I am, to Set such an high value on my self or any thing I enjoy, as to violate the Enjoyment of my own peace and Satisfaction, through Resentments at my Reviler, or through Loss and prejudice of whatever I had: No, rather let me possess my Soul in patience, Silencing my Discontents with this Consideration, that an All-wise and Infinitely Good Providence order'd or permitted things to be thus towards me ; and that 'tis for the Tryal, for the Improvement of my Graces of Meekness, Humility, Christian Patience, and Charity, that I am in this manner exercised with provocations.

But alas, alas, how utterly inexcusable is indulged fomented passion, though a Complectional Vice, though our lyableness unto it is owing to Temper and Constitution of Body ; for though 'tis more Difficultly tameable upon this account, yet sure not impossible

impossible to be tamed by the Aids of Reason, of Religion, and of Grace : So that I fear those Persons do not Strive against it as for the Mastery, who habitually fall into Anger, and on whom it Returns frequently with as much violence as ever : They use not I am apt to suspect the Means of Conquering, and therefore is it they attain not the End, a Conquest ; They use not Prayer, Meditation, and Fasting, powerful instruments by which this kind of Evil Spirit, the Angry Devil, Goeth out of a Man ; but without Rending and Tearing of him as a violent passion doth : Or if they use the means of Ejection mention'd, they neglect others greatly Assistant ; such as fixt purposes and Resolutions against this furious Vice for the future, flight of all Occasions and provoking Excitements thereof, a Stifling of the first Springing Motions of it within our Breasts : Thus would easily-provok't Persons fight Thus would they Contend, they

F 3

should

should be assured of a Victory over their passions, and become more than Conquerors through Christ who would Strengthen them.

The Prayer.

O THEOU God of infinite Goodness and Clemency, Strong to Avenge thy offended Majesty on Sinners, and yet Slow to Anger, Patient and Long-suffering, in the midst of thy wrath thinking on Mercy; we beseech thee to produce in us an Imitation of thy Slowness to Anger, of thy Patience and forbearance; for how can we expect to obtain Mercy from Thee, if we Exercise it not first towards our offending Brethren? O Rebuke in us then the evil Spirit of Rage and fury, Dispossess and Change it into a Spirit of Mildness; Still the Storms, becalm the boisterousness of our passions, which otherwise like a troubled Sea will never suffer us to be at Rest.

The Prayer.

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Convince us, O Lord, that Immoderate Anger is the Impotency of Reason and Understanding, the wild breaking Loose of head-strong lust and passion; that 'tis a short kind of Madness, an Effect of Pride and Haughtiness, the Discovery of a weak, impatient, and Effeminate Mind, which can bear very Little: And by force of these Considerations in Conjunction with thy Grace, cause us to cease from Anger, to let go wrath, and have a care we fret not our selves in any wise to do evil.

Convince blessed God, the furious, that by studying Revenge, they Resemble their Father the Devil; the most Malicious of Beings; that they act quite Contrary to thy Merciful and Gentle Nature, who takest not Advantage against sinners, punishing them according to their provocations; but much beneath their sinful Demerits: Convince Passionate Persons that they are their own Greatest Tormentors, while they possess not their Souls in Patience,

but turn other mens sins and offences, into their own both Sins and Punishments.

O that we may therefore walk as the Ever-blessed Jesus did, in abundance of Love, Meekness, and Patience, and so find Rest unto our Souls; O that we may put off all Anger, Wrath, Malice, Strife, and every turbulent uneasie passion, and may put on bowels of Mercy, Kindness, Humbleness of mind, Long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another: If any of us have a Quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave us, Grant that we may do so likewise.

O Give us Grace to Quench the first Sparks of an Angry Resentment, before they kindle into a flame; not to suffer our whole Anger to arise, but to suppress the smallest Beginnings of it, before it Settles on our minds, and grows to a greater height.

Convince

Convince us, holy Father, that we give place to the Devil, when-ever we indulge a furious Passion; that the wrath of man, worketh not the Righteousness of thee our God: O thou therefore who Rulest the Raging of the Sea. Still the madness of our Passions; O thou who commandest the Winds and the Waves, and they obey thee, allay the Storms of our enraged Displeasure.

Grant O Gracious Lord, that we may so watch over the least Tendencies to immoderate Anger, that the Sun may not at any time Go down upon our wrath; that it may not ranckle into Hatred and a desire of a Revenge, but that it may be as Soon Dismiss'd, as Excited; Turn we beseech Thee our natural passion of vicious fury, into the Channel of an holy Zeal for Revenge upon our Lusts and Vices; let us be excessively Angry at our selves instead of being Displeas'd with others for our weak estate in Grace, and for our abounding Strength in wickedness: O make us
F 5 back

ward to Give an Offence, and as forward
 to Forgive one offer'd us; may a Spirit
 of Meekness and Gentleness Rest upon
 us; let the Peace of God so Rule in our
 Hearts, that we may Love and shew
 Kindness to our most implacable En-
 mies: Cause us to Forgive, as we De-
 sire and Look to be forgiven; make us
 Calm and Dispassionate, that thy Dove-
 like Spirit of Truth and Holyness may
 visit us with an Olive-branch of Peace:
 And then Tranquillity and quiet Sedate-
 ness of mind having been the General
 temper of our Souls on Earth, we shall
 at Death be Remoted as Quietly out of
 our Bodies into Celestial Regions,
 where there is nothing but Eternal Calm,
 without the least Disturbance or Dis-
 composure of Spirit. Amen, Amen.

Meditation IX.

*Against the Sin of Murmuring and
Impatience amidst Divine Chastise-
ments.*

Impatience under Affliction is our punishment as well as Sin ; it frets and corrodes the Mind, and thereby doubles upon us our sufferings ; adding to that of the Body, that of the Spirit also : and most Just and Agreeable is it, that those who refuse submission to God's Government, should be punish'd by their own perverseness.

Ah how foolish a Vice is Discontent with God's Dispensations of Providence toward us ; it can in no wise make our Condition better, but will certainly render it much worse, both on a Natural account, and likewise

wise by Divine most just Ordination: For wriggling our Necks under the Yoke of Distress, is the ready way to make it sit more heavy and Galling; and Repining Discontent at the Chastisements of Heaven, is so far from Relieving us of them, that they provoke God both to continue and Aggravate them upon us.

Alas Man, how knowest Thou but thy Affliction is Design'd to thee in Mercy? but that 'tis the Greatest Blessing can be bestow'd upon thee? by keeping off the Greatest Plague, Spiritual Sickness, Death, and Destruction! And canst thou think it Reasonable to Repine at thy Soul's Cure or preservative in health? Canst thou think it suitable to murmur at what may be thy highest instance of Happiness, thy Greatest Matter of Rejoycing?

God sees thou canst not be happy Eternally, and free from Temporal Affliction;

Affliction ; and hadst thou rather (imprudent Creature!) enjoy thy Good things here with *Dives*, than Rest with *Lazarus* in *Abraham's* Bosom? God foresees that his Blessings of Earthly prosperity would be Real Curses unto thee, by proving Disadvantages to thy Soul ; and therefore is it, he in Compassion with-holds them.

Thus he denies thee Temporal Riches, that thou may'st be Rich towards God ; Rich in Faith and Good Works : He with-holds from thee plenty of provision and fulness of Bread, lest giving it thee, he might send Leanness withall into thy Soul ; lest being full thou might'st Deny him, and say who is the Lord? He finds poverty of Spirit, most consistent with thy poverty of Fortune ; he finds thy Dependance upon him the more firmly Establish't, by dispensing to thee Day by Day his Fatherly Allowance. Does he deny thee

thee Health of Body and soundness of Constitution? Why he does it is likely to a very Good purpose; that thy Soul may be the more healthy and Thriving in the Graces of his Spirit: in Humility, in Patience, in Contempt of the World, in Resignation to the Disposals of his All-wise and Just, and Gracious Providence.

A person who does not consider 'tis in order to his future ease and welfare, will be apt to account his Chirurgeons painful Launcing and laying open the Ill-affected part in his Body, a cruel unkindness unto him; but he who is mindful that all the Smart and Anguish he is put to is only in order to his subsequent Ease, and for Recovery of the unsound part to its accustomed Constitution; This Man will be ready to Kiss the hand that probes and cuts him, and will Thank his healer for dealing faithfully with him, though never so severely.

Yet

Yet ah the perverseness which is in most of us ! who wound our selves by sinning, and then complain of the sharp Instruments made use of for our Cure ; who make our Souls Dis-temper'd with Iniquity, and then cry out against the bitter potion prescribed us by God for our Recovery ! Who provoke him by Dis-obedience, and yet murmur under his Corrections for the same ! But is this equal Carriage, and Just dealing ? Is it not the most unreasonable ? Ought it not on the contrary to be said unto God, I have born Chastisement, I will not offend any more ; that which I see not, teach thou me ; and lead me into the way Everlasting, though through Briars and Thorns, though through many Tribulations.

Alas that which heightens our Discontent with our present Circumstances, is our too intent poring on the
the

the worst side of our Condition; a
pondering chiefly our Wants, our
Sufferings, and Distresses; whereas
did we but compare our Wants with
our Possessions, our Calamities with
our Enjoyments, we should soon
find the former if not outweighed
with the latter, yet certainly much
Alleviated by them: No man in my
opinion is so miserable, but he may
meet with some cause or other of
Comfort, and consequently of Thank-
fulness that 'tis not worse with him;
Thus, did we but look Downward
as well as Upwards amidst our Affli-
ctions, I mean, did we but contem-
plate what those in a worse condition
than we, want and suffer; as well as
what those in a better, possess and
enjoy; we should if not Extreamly
afflicted, find occasion to turn our
murmurings into Rejoycings, our
Discontents into most peaceful Satis-
factions.

For

For what though Thou art in Need of several things which others enjoy? Do but consider how many persons, perhaps better than thy self, are in Need of much more, of absolute Necessaries; and then silence thy Repineings. What though thou sufferest under great pain and affliction? Ah do but meditate what more acute dolours and Distresses others feel, which Thou art freed from; and then see if thou hast not more reason to praise God for his Goodness, than to fret against him for his Disciplining Providence?

Impatience is a most provoking sin, and therefore a very unlikely Remedy of our Sufferings; it imports a Quarrelling with God for his Allotments towards us; and consequently a Rebellious Disowning his Sovereignty and Right of Dominion over us: and is this sort of behaviour under Calamities a likely way to Remove

move or render them Less burthen
some? Is it not rather an Adding
sin to sin, Divine wrath to wrath, and
punishment to punishment?

Ah why should we be impatient
why Discontented under God's Chas-
tisements, whenas the Deity is the
Author of the Good we enjoy, as
well as of the evil we suffer; and
shall we receive Good at the hand of
God, and shall we not also receive
Evil? especially considering that our
Mercies far surpass our Miseries, our
Receipts our Deprivations; nay our
severest Distresses may be, and usu-
ally are sent in greatest kindness un-
to us: And let them be never so
Grievous and distressive, yet are
they far Less than our Deservings
who have merited Death Temporal
and Eternal: And therefore if God
commutes Everlasting Punishment
the due Wages of Sin, for Tempo-
rary Afflictions, we have no reason
to murmur at such his kind and mo-
derated

derated Corrections, but to be Grateful under them, that they are not Larger and more Grievous ones, viz. Remedylefs and never-Ceasing Torments!

And then Reckoning with our selves, That the Sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which shall be Revealed in us, and which these our sufferings if Sanctified, make us Meet-partakers of; How can we Repine? How shall we not rather Rejoyce and Glory under Tribulation? as knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience, and Patience Experience, and Experience Hope towards God, and Hope towards him well-Grounded, maketh not Ashamed. And can we look up to yonder Heaven, and Shrink under Calamities? Can we behold by an Eye of Faith the Glories Above, and think much of Afflictions which Prepare us for them?

As

An infinitely Knowing God assuredly knows what's best for us ; an infinitely Good God assuredly Consults most our Good and Interest ; and an infinitely Just God cannot do us any Harme, never acts Unrighteously towards us ; and therefore why should we not intrust our selves and our whole affairs in his hands, and all wayes reckon that Best which he Ordains us ? Not only quietly Submitting unto, but also making God Choice for us our Own ; cheerfully Accompanying his Divine Guidance, rather than being forcibly Led by it.

Meekness and Submission to Providence ought to be our practice whenas whether we will or no it must be so ; and therefore when we must bear what God lays on us, why should we not make a Vertue of Necessity, and bear Affliction Contentedly ? Especially considering that Divine Chastisements are God's Pur-

gatory

gatory-flames (and none other are to be expected ;) whereby he melts down our Pride and Haughtiness, our Trust and Confidence in Creature-Comforts ; whereby he Brightens and Illustrates our Graces, and causes us to come out of the fiery furnace of Distress more Purified and Refined from our sinful Dross and Corruption.

The Prayer.

O Blessed Lord, infinite in Mercy, abundant in Goodness and Truth ; who dost not afflict willingly, nor Grieve the Children of Men, not out of thy meer arbitrary pleasure, but for their Good, that they may become partakers of thy holyness ; we accept, O God, with all Thankfulness thy fatherly Corrections, we desire unfeignedly to humble our selves under thy mighty chastising hand, that thou mayst Exalt us in thy due season : Try us even as Silver is Tryed, seven times in the fire, so thou canest

*us to come out of the furnace of affliction
more Purified and Refined.*

*We have sinn'd O Lord, we have done
exceeding wickedly ; and therefore
shouldst thou deal with us after our
sins, and Reward us according to our
iniquities, these thy correcting Rods
might justly be turned into devouring
Scorpions, these thy Stripes of a Father
into the destroying Execution of a Judge's
Sentence ; yet O God most holy, O Lord
most Mighty, O holy and most merciful
Saviour, in the midst of Judgment
be thou pleased to Remember Mercy,
and in the midst of punishment call
us to remember Turning unto Thee by
sincere Repentance : O suffer us not in
our bitterest Distress for any pains to
fall from Thee ; suffer us not to cast
away our hope, and make shipwreck of
our faith, but give us to wait with pa-
tient perseverance in well-doing, for a
Deliverance.*

The Prayer.

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We beseech thy Divine Majesty to keep us from murmuring at thy afflictive Providences, nay even from expressing the least Dislike and Dissatisfaction under them; for why should we complain of the kind officious hand which cuts and launceth our Spiritual Sores, in order to let out their corruption, in order to heal and cure them? Why should we complain of Bodily evil, seeing 'tis for a Greater Good that we suffer it, for the health and welfare of our Souls?

O cause us to Justifie thee our God in thy severest process of Justice against us, acknowledging thee Righteous in all thy Works, Just and True in all thy ways; and stedfastly believing that in very Faithfulness thou hast caused us to be troubled: Nay, even to Bless and Praise thy holy Name amidst the greatest Adversity, that thou dost so far condescend to take Notice of us worthless Creatures, as to punish us with thine own hand, and chasten us with afflictions, that we should

should not be condemned with the sinful World !

O how know we, but we are more indebted to thee for thy Corrections, than for thy more Apparent favours and Benefits ; and shall we then murmur and be impatient under them ? God forbid.

Convince us rather, Good Lord, that whom thou Lovest thou Chastenest, and Correctest every Son whom thou Receivest ; that if we are without Chastisements, then are we bastards and not Sons ; Convince us that 'twas through many Tribulations that the Glorious Company of the Apostles, that the Noble Army of Martyrs made their Entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven ; that it was through such violences that they took it as it were by force : Remind us that 'twas through sufferings that our blessed Saviour was made perfect ; that He himself went not up to Joy, before he first suffer'd Pain ; that He enter'd

the

not into Glory, before he was crucified: O make us in Conformity to him the Captain of our Salvation, patiently to charge thorough all Adversities, Losses, and Disappointments till we arrive at the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ.

Give us holy Father to lye Prostrate at thy feet whenever thou contendest with us; let us Repent to the Amendment of our evil ways, and not Repine at those smarting Sufferings which tend to Rebuke our foolish forsaking Thee the Author of our Blessedness; let us be dumb with a silent Reverence whenever thy heavy hand of Chastisement is upon us: O cause us then in all lowliness and Humility to submit to thy Providence; to make diligent Search after the Accursed thing for which thou art Displeas'd with us; to Kiss thy Rod of Correction, and Learn that Reforming Lesson which it dictates; lest otherwise it Breaks us in pieces, and there be none to Deliver us.

O Suppress in us all Repining thoughts, and make us drink chearfully the cup of Affliction, how bitter soever it is; we shall have reason to Thank thee, O Lord, for it, if it proves Medicinal to our Souls; O make it such we entreat thee: Let this be the use of Temporal Calamities, their weaning our Affections from the Vanities below, their Raising and Settling our desires on the infinitely more valuable things Above, their rendering us Meek, Humble, Contented, Resign'd; that so our Faith, Hope, and Patience may be found in the Day of our Lord, Laudable, Glorious, and Honourable; and that being Afflicted for a season, we may be endlessly comforted. Amen, Blessed Saviour, Amen.

Meditation X.

On Love to God.

TIS our Duty, and 'tis our Interest and Priviledge ; our Duty, we being commanded to Love him with all our hearts, souls, and strengths ; and our Interest, for what greater Love to our selves than to Love the fountain of all Loveliness ? than to Love him, in whom are compriz'd all those Excellencies in infinite Degrees, which Scatteringly and imperfectly reside in the Creatures, and yet render them Amiable and Admired !

Nothing is more Reasonable also than to Love God, a being so transcendently Good in himself, so Gracious and Loving unto us ; for to Him we owe all the powers of our

G 2

Bodies,

Bodies, all the noble faculties of our Souls; all that we Are, all that we have comes Entirely from him; we should be very ungrateful persons should we Love any thing so well as him, much more, should we Love any thing Above him; for he hath not only created us, doth not only preserve, and provide for us Comforts as well as Necessaries; but he hath also dearly Redeem'd us from everlasting Destruction, not with corruptible things, such as Silver and Gold, but with no Less a Ransom than the precious Bloodshed of his Dear Son, God Co-equal with the Father: He hath likewise Sanctified us with the Regeneration of his blessed Spirit.

Thus hath God not only provided us all the Conveniences of this life, but also all things appertaining to a Better; has given us Spiritual Blessings as well as Corporal; means of
Grace

Grace, and hopes of Glory : So that He hath layd on us the Strongest obligations to Love him, and if any thing else in the whole Creation is Lovely, much more Eminently so is the Divine Majesty, who is owner of all his Creatures Loveliness, and of Infinite more !

If Beauty is an object of Love, behold God the most beautiful Being, in whom dwells perfection of Comeliness ! If Riches are attractives of Esteem and Valuation, behold the Deity the Treasury of all Wealth, and of whatever is valuable ! If pleasure is a thing Lovely and desirable, behold in God's presence Fullness of Joy, and at his Right hand pleasures for Evermore !

Sure I must hate my self, if I Love not God ; for therein consists my Wellfare and Happyness ! Shall I love other things, and not Him from
G 3 whom

whom they Borrowed their Lovely-
ness? Shall I Love the Stream, and
not the Fountain of blessedness?
What Joy do I deprive my self of, if
I Love not God? If I hate not all
other things in comparision of him?
He that Loveth Father or Mother,
sayes our Blessed Saviour, more than
me, is not worthy of me; and he
that Loveth Son or Daughter, the
most Near and Dear things, more
than me; is not worthy of me. O
who know the Enravishing Delights
but those who have experienced
them, of Loving the Deity, and be-
ing beloved by him! of holding such
Sweet Communion with the God of
all Consolation! It is a very Great
Favour and Condescension that the
Majesty of Heaven and Earth will
Admit of our imperfect Love, will
Graciously Accept it; for 'tis imper-
fect, though never so Sincere; 'tis
finite Love, though never so Sera-
phical.

What

What an inconceivable Honour is it to be vouchsafed the Loving our Creator ! 'Tis certain we can have no better Object ; no one so Good ; the benefit of Loving God redounds wholly to our selves, not at all to him : However I will Love the Lord, not so much for my own Ends, as because he hath Commanded my Love ; as because he is a supereminently Amiable Being, infinitely Deserving my Love ; as because 'tis a Debt due from me a Dependant Creature, to my Maker and the Author of all my Enjoyments. I will Delight in Loving and Obeying him as long as I live, and I by his Grace will Evidence the Truth of my Love, by paying an Universal Respect unto all his Commandments. *Amen, Amen.*

The Prayer.

O Thou Supreme Excellency, whom to know is Life Eternal, whom to Love is Heaven upon Earth; Thou Being infinitely Lovely in thine own Nature, Exceeding kind and Loving unto us; manifest thy self more and more unto us, that we may Love Thee more and more; and that Loving Thee with increase, we may Enjoy Thee in a much Larger measure: Wean we pray Thee our affections from the Creature, which can make no Suitable Return to our Love, which cannot Satisfie the Longing of our Souls, and win them unto Thee, who by thy Mercies preventest our Love, by thy Mercies dost nourish and improve it, canst fully Gratifie the Good desires of our hearts, and wilt amply Recompence and Reward them!

O Thou

O Thou Joy of Angels, and Sovereign
Happyness of all thy Saints, Oh that
our Souls could Love Thee without Li-
mits, as Thou art without Limits Love-
ly and Amiable! Oh that we may Love
Thee for thy Essential Goodness in Thy
self, as much as for thy Derived impar-
ted Goodness unto us! Let our thoughts,
let our desires and affections zealously
Embrace Thee, and may we be embrac-
ed with a peculiar love and favour by
Thee; may still new Degrees of thy Love,
widen and enlarge our Capacities of Re-
ceiving them, and as they Enlarge, do
Thou flow in with an increase of Divine
Communications.

Convince us O Lord, that those Ex-
cellencies which are Borrowed, which
are Imperfect, which are variously Di-
spers'd in the Creation, are all concen-
ter'd in Thee the Original in infinite
Beauty and Perfection; and shall we
not Love Thee the Springhead of Bless'd-
ness more than the Derived Streams,
than the lesser Rivulets of felicity? O
G 5 perswader

perswade us that we are unkind to our selves if we Love not Thee the Author, the Treasury of our Happyness, Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal.

Alas we find our hearts Cold, Dead, and Sluggish in thy Service, Lord Quicken, Lord enflame them; Enflame them with thy Divine Love, Quicken them in thy Righteousness: They have gone Astray, they have wander'd after many other Lovers, after the pleasures, profits, and honours of this world which have miserably Deceived them; O fix them upon Thee, who wilt everlastingly Love them, Everlastingly Continue Lovely, and never Disappoint them: Make holy God, our Love of Thee, an Uniting, an Assimilating Love, that We may Love what Thou Lovest, and hate what Thou hatest; that we may do whatever will please Thee, forbear whatever will offend Thee; conforming ourselves to thine Image in Holyness: O that our Affections could Ever continue such
towards

towards Thee as they are at present !
O that we may demonstrate the Truth of
our Love to Thee, by our obeying with
all Willingness, Zeal, and Chearfulness
thy Divine precepts ; by obeying them
Universally, Sincerely, and Constantly
to our lives End.

Then only O Heavenly Father, can
we have Confidence towards Thee, shall
we be Assured we Love Thee aright, when
we Love Thee for thine Own self ; when
we Love Thee Soverainly and Su-
preamly ; when our Love is so Exalted,
as that we may be said to hate and De-
spise all other things in Comparison of
Thee : O give us thus Zealously to be
affected towards Thee ; Grant that the
Love of thy Self may Crucifie in us the
Undue Love of our selves, the inordi-
nate Love of the World, or of any our
Dearest Relations ; and that being
Empty of our selves, and of all Confi-
dence in the Creature, we may be whole-
ly taken up with Admiration, Love, and
Delight

*Delight in Thine infinite Perfections;
and in the Astonishing Expressions of
thy Goodness and Loving-kindness to
the Lost Sons of Adam: O may thy
Love Conquer and Over-power our
hearts, Melt them into Gratitude and
Obedience; may it Disengage their Affe-
ctions from every Narrow and particular
Good, and Settle them upon Thee the
Universal One; Causing us to Love
Thee Above all things; every created
blessing as it bears the impressions of thy
Wisdom, Beauty and Power; and all
mankind for Thy sake, and in Obedi-
ence to thy Commands: Preserve in
us, Good Lord, such Devout flames
of a Godly Affection; and let us be our
Beloved's, and Thou our Beloved ours to
all Eternity. Amen, Amen.*

Meditation XI.*On Zeal in the Service of God.*

HOW natural a Consequent is this of the Love of God? Zeal to please him, Zeal to Resemble him, Zeal to promote his Honour and Glory! Where, if not here, is Zeal Becoming? Where else can it be so Suitably placed? Nay, our Divine Services how can they well be Acceptable without it? For where there is Sincerity of Intention in doing our Duty, (without which no Duty can be pleasing to Heaven) we can scarce conceive Fervency of Spirit to be wanting; unless through weakness and indisposition of Body: And for the Service of God, (the most Glorious and Excellent of Beings) to be a cold and Languid Worship,

146 *On Zeal in the Service of God.*

ship, how Great an Absurdity, how Great an Inconsistency is this? Certainly the Service of the Temple, the Sacrifice of the Altar, requires the flame and Fire of the Altar to render it of a sweet-smelling Savour. To perform Duty to God with formality and indifferency of Spirit, is neither to consider the Nature of the Work we are about, the Greatness and Excellency of the Divine Majesty, nor yet what Earnestness and Zeal the Care of our own Salvation exacts from us.

The Love of God demands our whole heart, Soul and Strength; and consequently the keeping his Commandments, the Genuine Evidence of our Love, demands the utmost Exercise of our Powers and Faculties both bodily and Spiritual: That is not a Service of God which is carelessly discharged, but rather an Affront, rather a Contempt of him; 'Tis a doing

On Zeal in the Service of God. 147

doing somewhat in Religion to Still and Quiet the uneasie Reproofs of our own Consciences, but not doing any thing with a design of pleasing God, out of Obedience and Love to his Commandments, or from a desire of becoming Like unto him in Holiness : which Regards alone can consecrate and render acceptable our Services.

Zeal where is it due, if not in the Divine Worship ? Than which nothing is of greater Importance, nothing of greater Worth, nothing more for our Interest and Advantage ! Where the safety of our Immortal Souls, our Heaven and Eternal Happiness are concern'd, there certainly no warmth of Heart, no Diligence of endeavour can be too much.

Ah did we but consider God's Zeal, the sounding of his Bowels, and tenderness of his Compassion toward

148 *On Zeal, in the Service of God.*

toward us; we could not sure want Zeal and Ardency of Affection towards him!

The holy Angels above who best understand the Value of God's Service, who know best how Exalted a pitch of Love and Duty an infinitely Good and Gracious Divine Majesty merits at our hands, what a Pattern do They set us of Industry, Zeal, and joyful Alacrity in Religious worship! And how does their intense and flaming Affection in God's Service, Shame and Reprove our doing the work of the Lord negligently? Can we serve either a Greater Master, or a Better? One who Deserves better our Services, or who is more willing and Able to Reward them plenteously?

Do we pray thy Will be done on Earth as 'tis in Heaven, with a like Universality, Constancy, Fervour
and

On Zeal in the Service of God. 149

and Chearfulness of holy Duty, and yet do we contradict this our Petition, by a partial, formal, and un- delightful Obedience ? Have we that pious Reverence amidst our Devotions, which is answerable to the Great and Glorious Presence of God, with whom in Prayer we have to do ? Have we that importunity and Earnestness of Supplication, that warmth and Zeal of Devout Address, which is any way suitable to those pressing Indigencies we have to be supply'd ? To those burthensome miseries we have to be delivered from ? Or does not coldness and indifference of affection, wandering and distraction of thoughts, Dulness and weariness of mind mix with and deprave our Divine Worship ? Ah how Little fervour of Spirit have we in serving the Lord ! how Little of the true Spirit of Prayer, in our praying unto him !

Do

Do not Gods Sabbaths, his Religious Ordinances seem Tiresome unto us? A very Toil and Burthen does not his Easie Yoak of precepts sit Heavy on our Necks? And his Commandments appear Grievous by reason of our want of Approbation, Love and Affection towards them? which would breed pleasure and Delight in their performance. Ah 'tis for that we are Ignorant how God's Service is perfect freedom and what a Slavery there is in serving diverse Lusts and Passions, which makes us so Dead and Listless in his service; when otherwise we should be all Spirit and Life whilst Employed in pious Exercises!

Ah had we more Love for God, it would render us more Active, more Warm and sprightly in his Worship: it would put us upon doing our utmost to please him; and we should not Endure coldness and flagging of affection

affection in our religious Addresses :
But Lukewarmness of Devotion
would appear to us nigh as distasteful
as perfect Deadness in Duty ; and we
should never think that flat Lifeless
Service Acceptable to God, which
we could not Approve of to our
selves.

The Prayer.

BLessed and Glorious Lord God,
who infinitely Deservest our
most warm and Zealous Services, who
makest thy Angels Spirits, and those
thy Ministers a flame of fire ; flames
indeed of Devotion, of Divine Love
and Gratitude, of Delight and fervour
in holy Obedience, O make us also all
flame and Spirit in thy Worship ; that
we may worship thee with Zeal and Ar-
dour of Affection, as well as with Sin-
cerity and uprightness of heart.

Produce

Produce in us holy, Father, a Zeal of importunity in prayer Suitable to the wants we have to be Supplied, suitable to the Dangers and Evils we have to be delivered from, suitable to the worth of the Necessity, the Importance of thy Divine blessings, Temporal Spiritual and Eternal which we stand in Need of, and which are only to be derived from thee the fountain of all Blessedness.

O cause us to Evidence our high Value and Esteem of thy Heavenly favours, of the Gifts and Graces of thy Holy Spirit, by our Zealous Concernment for the obtaining them; by our coveting Earnestly those best Gifts, and Seeking after such things which are more Excellent.

Give us, Give us, Good Lord, more Love to thee our God, that we may have a greater Zeal for thy Honour and Glory, that we may boldly Rebuke vice. Earnestly promote Holyness; be Grieved

prin-

The Prayer.

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principally for sin, because thy blessed spirit is Grieved thereby: may our hearts burn within us with pious Love, Reverence and Delight, when we Read and meditate on thy Sacred Word; when we Pray, when we return Thanks-givings, or are any ways Employed in Religious Duties; let our hearts be sad, when our Affections are cold and languid in thy Service.

O Endue us with the burning Love, with the flame and Zeal of holy Cherubims, that we may Experience also their Transports of Delight, their Extasies of Joy and Satisfaction in thy Worship! make us we beseech thee thus Exceeding Jealous for Thee the Lord God of Hosts; may the Zeal of thine House well nigh Consume us; may we account it our very Meat and Drink to be doing thy Will; and let nothing flat and lifeless mingle it self with our piety and Devotion.

Does

Does Gracious God, our Eternal Salvation depend upon our aright worshipping thee, and do we worship thee with a faint and heartless Service? *Al-*
cure the Deadness and formality of the
Servants best Religious performances
cure the indifferency and Earthlyness of
our Affections: Make us rather to be
on the wing of Devotion, to be always
Zealously affected in a Good matter, to
be fervent in Spirit, Serving the Lord,
that so we may Anticipate much of an
Heavenly State and Temper, which shall
be compleated hereafter; that our lives
at present may be full of inward peace
and comfort, our Deaths of Joy and
Consolation in believing, and our Eter-
nity full of Glory and Celestial Happy-
ness. Amen: for the sake of our dying
Redeemer, Amen.

Meditation XII.

On Trust in God.

TRUST and Relyance on God is our Duty and our Priviledge; 'tis our Duty as we were created frail, impotent, Necessitous Beings, and for that reason Confiding Dependant ones; as also God our Sustainer is a Self-sufficient and All-sufficient Store of Happyness, whose infinite Perfections render him an object of our Hope and Trust proportionable to our greatest Wants, of Ability to Remove or Relieve our most extream acutest Distresses. And what more Natural and Reasonable than that we should there place our Confidence and Relyance, where we have our Support and Dependance? But that we should there found our Trust, where

where we cannot be Disappointed
But that a poor, helpless, distressed
Creature should seek abroad for Succour and Relief? And where should he Seek it so Suitably and Effectually as in God-Almighty? the fountain of all Strength, the inexhaustible Magazine of Relief, the protecting Sanctuary of the distressed who fly unto him for Refuge: A God as Willing and Ready, as Sufficient and Powerful to Relieve us!

And that this flying to God for Help and Succour, and reposing all his Trust and Confidence in the Deity, is the Confiding person's Privilege and Advantage as well as bounden-Duty is evident; for what can give that Man inward Quiet and Tranquillity even in his best Condition, who is subject every moment to the uncertainties and vicissitudes of Human Affairs, to all the Dangers, all the Hazards, all the Actual Evils and Misfortunes

Misfortunes of this mortal life, but a Relying Assurance that nothing can befall him beside the wise Counsel, gracious Will and Ordination of that God in whom he puts his Trust? Whose power is of that extent as to furnish all our Needs, and Satisfie all our desires, as to secure to us his favours and blessings, and to keep off from us, or else Sanctifie our troubles and afflictions: whose Omnipotence is directed by infinite Wisdom to Know what's best for us, his Wisdom exercised in Contriving and Ordering what's best for us, and both his Power and Wisdom vigorously moved in their operations by infinite Love and Goodness to Do what's best for us: An humble confidence in God makes us despise the worst of the Creature's Threatenings, frees us from Carking troubles within our selves, preserves a firm peaceful temper in the midst of Storms and Adversities; giving us an unbroken

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Mag-

Magnanimity of Spirit, a true Dominion of Mind over all outward things and occurrences.

All our inordinate Care taken, without Gods immediately Ordaining, or at least permissive Providence, will be to no purpose; we cannot, as of our selves, add one Cubit to either our Bodily or Spiritual Stature; we shall be Dwarfs in Grace as well as in Natural Growth, without the Aids of God's Spirit: If we cast all our Care upon the Deity, this will be an Engagement on *him* to take Care of us; if we Trust in God, we need not fear any thing else, He will mightily Defend or Support us.

All other Objects of Trust are Deceitful, because Vanishing, Empty, Unsatisfying; either they are willing to help and want Ability; or they have Ability and want willingness; or

or else they are Destitute of both, and so deserve not any Trust to be reposed in them : Thus 'tis with all Foundations of Reliance on the Creature ; but now God is such an Adequate Object of our hope and comfortable Expectation, that we may be sure in him to meet with no Disappointment ; for he is willing and Able, and earnestly desirous to supply all our Wants, to Relieve all our Distresses ; to pardon all our Sins, heal all our Infirmities, Sanctify our depraved Nature : He never yet fail'd any one who put his Confidence in him ; his Truth, his Goodness, his Justice will not suffer him to do it.

We shall ease our selves of much Anxiety and Tormenting Solitude, if we remove all immoderate Care from our own Breasts, and refer our Affairs more to God's providential Management : We must Trust our
H 2 selves

selves with the Deity, and into his hands commit our Spirits when we are Dying, why not Resign ourselves and our Concernments into his keeping now in our Life-time? When 'twill be more Acceptable to do so, because more voluntary; but then 'twill be at the best in some measure constrain'd.

If we do not now in time of health and prosperity, as well as at the hour of Death and Day of Judgment commend our Souls and ways to God's Custody as into the hands of a faithful Creator and most Merciful Redeemer, we Ruin and undo ourselves; for if God keeps us not, the most vigilant Watchman waketh but in vain; if left alone to our selves the Evil one the Devil will presently bear us Company: and this one would think should be enough to make us fear being out of the Divine Charge and Protection.

The Deity has the tender Affection of a Father toward us, and consequently the Carefulness of a Father concerning us; 'Tis He alone can deliver us from all Dangers, and cause that we dwell in perfect peace and safety: why then Stay we not our Minds on him? Why deliver we not up our persons to his Tuition? Which is as the munition of Rocks for strength and preservation!

O Lord I commit my self to Thee, I Trust thee with all I have and am; the Trust is no more than what thou Gavest me, be Thou the more careful of it, because it came originally from Thee: Though Thou should'st Kill me, yet would I Trust in Thee; as knowing that thou canst bring Life out of Death, Light out of Darkness. In the Lord have I put my Trust, O let me never be confounded. *Amen.*

The Prayer.

O Thou who art the hope and confidence of all the Ends of the Earth, who never failest them who put their Trust in Thee, make us ever to have Recourse to thy Goodness ; make us ever firmly to Rely and depend on Thee in our most Grievous Difficulties and Distresses : Keep us, O Lord, in perfect peace both of Body and Soul, whose Minds are stay'd on Thee ; O suffer us not to Trust in Creature-Comforts, broken Reeds which will deceive us, if we lean upon them : But make us solely to confide in thee the everliving God, who givest us all things Richly to Enjoy. Grant that we may be inordinately careful for nothing, but in every thing by Prayer and Supplication with Thanksgiving, may make known our Requests unto Thee our God.

God, the liberal Rewarder of all those who seek Thee faithfully.

Permit us not, O Lord our safety, to cast away our Trust and Confidence in thy Mercy, but cause us to Retain it as a sure Anchor of our Souls, firm and stable unto the End ; when all Temporal Blessings seem to fail us, when our Eyes are even weary with looking for thy Salvation, yet never let our Faith fail, but give us to comfort our selves in thy word ; to look unto the Truth of thy Promises, and to the Almightyness of thy Ability to perform them : and from these supporting Considerations, O make us to Receive strength and Consolation.

In the multitude of the Sorrows and perplexities of our hearts, cause us to cast all our Care upon thee, being assured that Thou carest for us ; that Thou watchest over us by thy Providence, consultest our welfare by thy Wisdom ;

and wilt in thy due time effect it by thy Goodness and Power.

O Grant that we may commit the keeping of our selves, our ways and concernments unto Thee in well-doing, as into the hands of a faithful Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer; as knowing in whom we have believed, and being perswaded that thou art able to keep that which we have committed unto thee against the Great Day of Redemption.

When our Souls are most cast down, when they are most Disquieted within us, O give us still to Trust in Thee, who art the help of our Countenance, and our God; let we beseech thee, that thought of our Relation unto, of our propriety in Thee as Our God, silence all our Doubts, Root out all Distrust and Despondency from our hearts, and cause us to adhere unto Thee with a full Assurance of being either Rescued from

from our trouble, or else Graciously sustained under it.

O make us chearfully to Rely upon thee our God, in all our fears, in all our wants, in all our Afflictions; seeking first the Kingdom of Heaven and its Righteousness, and then not doubting but all other things truly needful either for our Support or Deliverance shall be Added unto us. Amen, Amen.

Meditation XIII.

On the Fear of God.

TIS our Duty, and 'tis our Advantage and happynefs ; fear the Lord all ye his Saints, there's the Duty ; for there is no want to them that fear him, there is the Happynefs, *Psalm 30. 9.*

We naturally fear any one we know will do us harm, or who has it in his power to do it ; and sure then we have just reason to fear God's Judgments for our sins, who is able to do us more harme than all the world besides ; for he hath power af-
ter

ter he hath kill'd to cast into Hell,
to pursue us with his Vengeance
into another state ; and he ever lives,
asto Reward the Godly, so to punish
Everlastingly the impenitent Sinner :
And therefore our Saviour at the
same time that he reproves our folly
of fearing man, forewarnes us whom
we should fear, God Almighty ; and
he Reinforceth this his Exhortation,
with a yea I say unto you, fear him.

And who would not fear thee O
Lord God of hosts, and Reverence
thy Name ? For thou only art Holy ;
Thou only art to be feared : With
Thee is power and Strength, with
thee therefore ought to be Domi-
nion and fear.

O who is so much an object of our
fear as God ? A mighty God, and
Terrible ! infinite in Justice, Almigh-
ty in Power, Awful in Omniscience
and

and Omnipresence! And who if we will nor fear him at present, so as to avoid Sin, will one day force us to fear him, when it shall be too Late to avoid Punishment.

Now this fear of God to which we are obliged, is not so much a fear of him upon the account of his Exact Justice and Almighty power, as an Aweful Regard to him mixt with Love, and a wariness of forfeiting his favour; 'Tis a fearing him for his very Goodness; that is, not only lest we loose our Share in it, but 'tis a letting his Essential Goodness in himself, and his Communicated Goodness unto us, out of a principle of Ingenuity and Gratitude, be our Chief Motive and Obligation to a Religious Caution, more than any regard had to the Divine Punishments and Severities: 'Tis a fear of Loosing God's Love, more than of feeling the fore Effects of his Displeasure.

And

And hath this fear of the Lord possession of our Souls? Do we fear him with a filial Reverential fear? More lest we loose our Interest in his Love and fatherly Affection, than for dread of incurring the severities of his Justice, as our Judge and Punisher? Does our Consideration of his manifold benefits conferr'd upon us, write in our hearts such an ingenuous Law of Thankfulness, as that we fear him more out of a sense of Gratitude for what we have Received of his Divine blessings, than for fear of forfeiting those which are yet in Reversion?

Ah'tis this fear of Reverence, this fear of Displeasing the Deity, this Holy Caution and Waryness, lest we err from his Commandments, which is the true Godly-fear, the most Acceptable in our Heavenly Fathers sight with a fear of vengeance to be executed upon them, the very Devils fear and tremble; but 'tis only a Son
of

of God, an Heir of Salvation, who fears God for his Goodness; fear of Divine Justice and Almighty Power is but the Beginning of Godly Wisdom, the first step in a profligate Sinners Conversion; but 'tis a fear of God made perfect by Love of him, a fear to offend him and loose his friendship, which crowns the work of Regeneration, and shews our Advance in a state of Grace and Salvation.

O our God, Thou art Terrible as well as Lovely, but Thou art also Lovely in thy very Terrour; for therefore stand we in Awe of thee, lest we should forfeit thy good will and favour: O how will Love as well as Abhorrence create a Dread in us! a Dread of offending our Beloved: How will Gods Mercy as well as his Justice cause us to fear him! Oh that we may fear and Love him more; and so much the more fear him

him, by how much we increase and abound in Love of him !

And certainly 'tis our wisest way on all accounts thus to fear God ; for they that fear the Lord , need fear nothing besides ! they having such an Almighty Protector and Deliverer their Guardian : They need fear nothing but sin, and such a fear as keeps them innocent from wilful offences, keeps them also calm and at peace in their own bosoms ; preserves them the Favourites of Heaven, and then they may defie all the Power and Policy of Hell.

The fear of any worldly thing will Lessen mens fear of God, but their true fear of God will take from them all slavish fear of the World ; the Lord is on our side, will they say, what need we fear what man can do unto us ? The fierceness of man's anger against us God can turn both to His
and

and our Praise, in causing us patiently to bear it ; and the Residue of Wrath will he Restrain. Men can do us no more harme than God will permit ; but who can stop his Arm when he stretcheth it forth to take vengeance ? He can suddenly change our Adversaries evil minds toward us into thoughts of Love and Beneficence, of Peace and Good will ; or at least, I should have said at most, for 'tis the Greatest Blessing God can bestow upon us ; he can amply Reward our light afflictions which are but for a season , with a far more exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory !

The fear of the Lord is our greatest Wealth and Riches as well as Safety and Protection ; they that fear the Lord, both Corporal and Spiritual blessings are theirs ; pardon of sin, healing of infirmities , the Supplies of God's Grace ; whether things present,

present or things to come, all are
Theirs; and they are Christ's, and
Christ is God's: God is the Por-
tion, the Lot of inheritance to
all those that stand in Awe of him,
and sin not; and in him being hid-
den all the Treasures of Goodness,
He being the never-failing fountain
of Happyness, those consequently
who truly fear and have an Inte-
rest in Him, can never lack.

If God is our Father, where is our
Son-like Honour of him? If he is
our Master, where is our Obedien-
tial Fear?

Ah who knows the power of Gods
Wrath, who knows how Great an
Object of Terrour he is, like the poor
Disconsolate and Despairing Sinner?
in whom the Arrows of the Almighty
stick fast, and his hand presseth him
fore; against whom God writeth
bitter things, and makes him to pos-
sess

sees the iniquities of his Youth ! Alas
to such a one God is fearful and Ter-
rible indeed ; he believes God's Ju-
stice and Judgments, and believing
that is, viewing them with a Sensible
and more Lively prospect he fears
and Trembles : For thereafter as a
Man Fears, so is God's Displeasure in
his account ; nay thereafter as a man
Loves as well as Fears, God propor-
tionably Great is his Dread of losing
his favour ; proportionably Grievous
is his Sorrow upon Having lost it.
Hence we find Holy *David* crying
out with bitterest Complaints, Thou
didst hide thy face from me, O Lord,
and I was sore troubled ; O turn
thee unto me again, and have mercy
upon me ; cast me not away from
thy presence, neither shut up thy
Loving-kindness in Everlasting Dis-
pleasure. Such a Cutting Grief doth
the loss of the Light of God's Coun-
tenance produce in those who sin-
cerely Love him. This Love indeed
casteth

casteth out all Servile Despondent fear, which hath Torment, and generateth to Bondage ; but it Quickens and improves a filial fear, such as restraineth from offending : O may we fear God more lest we forfeit his Love , than lest we incur the severe penalties of his Displeasure ; may we fear him with a Reverential Obedient fear as Sons, that we may never fear him with a burthensome Dismaying fear, as Slaves.

The

The Prayer.

O Thou the fear of Israel, who only art to be feared with a Sovereign Supream fear, so as to Extinguish in us that of all other things besides when in competition with our fear of Thee ; possess holy Father, our Souls with a pious Awe of thy Divine Majesty ; that we may serve thee our Lord with fear, and walk before thee with an humble Reverence : Endue our hearts with a filial ingenuous fear, mingled with Love and Obediential Respect ; make us to fear thee , because of thy very Goodness, lest we should forfeit thy Love and favour, more than for dread of incurring thy heavy Vengeance and Displeasure : Cause us to account thy
Loving

*Loving-kindness better than Life it self,
and then we shall dread the Loss thereof
more than Death.*

*Permit us not, O our God, for fear
of man to let fall our fear of Thee ; but
give us to fear Thee Religiously, and
we need fear nothing else ; nay we need
not fear thee Thy self Slavishly, with a
Guilty fear : Put blessed Lord thy fear
into our hearts, that we may not at any
time presumptuously Depart from thee,
but may with fear and Trembling work
out our own Salvation.*

*Make thy fear upon our Souls to
be a True Godly fear, causing us to
walk and behave our selves as alwayes
under thy All-seeing Eye and inspe-
ction ; Trembling with a fear of holy
Caution at thy presence : Ever Obeying
thee, because we Love thee ; and ever
Obedientially Loving thee, because afraid
of Loosing thy Love, by offending
thee.*

Give

Give us Gracious God, that fear of the Lord which is clean, Converting the soul, and Commanding that we depart from all iniquity ; give us such a Dread of thy Divine Majesty, as may make us Careful of pleasing thee, fearful of offending thee ; as may make us inquisitive to search thy Will, Diligent to performe it, and persevering in the Exercises of a Religious Awe and Reverence unto our lives end ; and then that Constant habitual fear of thee our God which has preserved us from wilful sinning, or put us upon Clearing the Guilt of it by Repentance, will afford us upon a Death-bed Peace of Mind, Consolation in believing ; and our fear of God will then be exchanged into Love and Confidence , into Joy and Delight in him at that hour of Death , and for Evermore , Amen , Blessed Saviour, Amen.

Meditation

Meditation XIV.

On Love and Charity to our Neighbour.

MUTUAL Love and Kindness is what the condition of our Nature dictates unto us; for man being born a Sociable converseable Creature, is for that very reason born an Amicable Loving one; for to what End and purpose should mankind Associate and Live together, Converse and hold Correspondence, but to perform offices of Aid and Assistance, of kindness and beneficence to each other? the very Notion and common

mon Acceptation of Humanity imports Courtesie and Good-will, Loving-kindness and compassion.

We are born also calamitous, infirm, necessitous Beings, and therefore mutually Dependant Creatures: and Dependance on each other necessarily infers a reciprocal help and beneficence: For what more Reasonable, than that those who by Nature are liable to stand in Need of other help, should Afford help to others when in want and Adversity?

'Tis the Prerogative of God alone to be Self-sufficient and Independant: and therefore God who saw every thing which he had made, and behold 'twas very Good, yet saw it not Good for man to be Alone, but resolved on making an Help Meet for him; that they might be mutually comforting and Assistant to each other: Though in Paradise man

was

was much nearer Self-sufficiency, and further Removed from helplessness than at present : So that both Nature, Reason, and the Ordination of God dictate, that we ought to be mutual helps and common Blessings to those of our kind ; as being our selves in the body, Subject to its wants and infirmities as well as other persons.

A further obligation to mutual Love and Beneficence arises from our being all very nearly Related, as Kinsfolks and brethren ; as all cast in the same mould, fashion'd according to the same General Likeness, partakers of the same blood, of the same common Humanity, nay of one very Substance, differenced only in some few Accidental Circumstances unessential to our Nature : And ought not now this nearest Relation of Consanguinity to make us Loving and Beneficent to all Man-
I kind

kind without exception ? Ought not the Cement of one blood, to unite us in one hearty Goodwill and Friendship ? Should not Similitude and Likeness beget Love ? Should not one common Nature produce in us one common Natural Affection ? Causing us to love our selves in loving another, to do Good to our selves in doing Good to another ; he being a part and member of our very Substance ; flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone : And no man, says the Apostle St. *Paul*, *Eph.* 5. 29. ever yet hated his own flesh, but Loveth and Cherisheth it, even as Christ the Church ; and as we in conformity ought to Love and cherish one another.

Tis Natural even among Savage Beasts for those of the same kind to live at a Loving Agreement, and not to prey upon each other ; and shall

Man-

Mankind whose very frame has Tenderness interwoven in it, be less Amicable and Loving than Brute-Creatures?

Reason and Scripture, the Law of Equity, and that of *Moses*, the Prophets, and Christ, all urge acts of Kindness and Charity from this very Argument, *Whatever you would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them; Matth. 7. 12.* You no doubt, were your Circumstances such as to be in Want and Distress, would that others should Relieve you, have you therefore a ready will and Inclination to Relieve others, whose Wants and Necessities Challenge your Relief: And since you know not, through the vicissitude of Humane Affairs, and some sudden turn of Providence, but that the Now miserable Condition of others, may become your own some time hence; let the hazard of your

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falling

falling into want of Charity yourselves, excite your Love and Beneficence towards those who are actually labouring under Penury and Affliction.

Giving Relief to others is an easing the troublesome Relentings of our own hearts, which must needs be touch'd and sorrowfully affected at the sight of a part of our own flesh, of our common Nature being in Misery and Distress; so that Love to others is the truest Love to ourselves, it relieving us of that Grief and mental Disquietude which a view of others wants and sufferings excited in us.

Nay the very Reflection on an act of Charity fills one with Joy and Delight, Refreshes the Giver's mind, as much as the Almsdeed did the Receiver's body; so that we the Benefactors are in some sort beholden

den even to the Relieved, for their yielding us an occasion of so great pleasure and Contentment : For to Recollect how we have been the Almoners of Divine Providence in distributing to the Necessitous, how we have rescued a poor miserable man from Extremity of want, have Triumph'd over his misery and misfortune ; and caus'd his refresh'd Bowels in the very act of Relieving him to bless us, and his whole person to offer up Prayers and Good wishes on our behalfs ; and how moreover we have made God hereby our Friend and Debtor, and have imitated and Gratified in doing Good the Supream Majesty of Heaven and Earth : To Review all this after an Almsgiving, cannot but raise great complacency within us, and cause us to applaud our selves for having performed so Generous, so Godlike, and withall so pleasing and Delight-some an action.

Nothing will administer to us so much Joy and Consolation when Dying, nothing so much strengthen us on a bed of Languishing, and make our bed in all our Sickness, as the Reflection how we have in our Life past through acts of Charity and Munificence made to our selves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, laid up to our selves Treasures in Heaven, a place of the best Security, of the largest Interest and Improvement : How we have been Eyes to the blind, and Feet to the Lame, through our supporting Alms-deeds ; how we have evidenced our Love to God, by Love to our Neighbour ; loving him for God's sake, and at his Injunction : How we have, like wise Merchants in a Foreign Country, Transmitted our Goods and Effects before us into that our Native Region, whither we intend

intend and expect shortly to Return
our selves.

Indeed I must Confess that Love
to our very Enemies which Chri-
stianity enjoyns, has at first little of
this pleasure and Delight, which ac-
companies doing Good to those who
never Dis-obliged us; nay that 'tis
an exceeding Irksom and Difficult
Duty, and that we are apt to cry out
'tis an hard Commandment, who can
bear it? But besides that Returning
Good for Evil, Blessings for Cursings,
Kindnesses for Injuries, is the ready
way to overcome our Adversary's
Enmity, and to convert it into a
reciprocal Love and beneficence to-
wards us; whereas a Retaliation of
dis-kindnesses serves only to multiply,
heighten, and perpetuate Quarrels,
and oftentimes ends in the utter
Ruine and destruction of both the
contending Parties: Besides this, if
we would be Children of our Hea-

venly Father, perfect as he is perfect, we must be Merciful even as he is Merciful, who is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil : Who as to his common favours makes no Difference in their distribution, but causeth his Sun to shine, his Rain to descend on the Good and Bad, on the Just and Unjust person, *Math. 5. 45.*

And oh how well does it Become us by heaping Coals of Love on our Adversary's heads, to endeavour to melt them down into Peace and Reconciliation ! How well does it Become us the offended not only to forgive, but to be the first in suing for a mutual good Agreement with our offenders, whenas God himself by his Ministers beseeches Sinners to be Reconciled unto him ! Whenas his holy Spirit strives with our obstinacy, woes and importunes us by his Gospel-Profers, and by his inward

Soli-

Solicitations to give over our Rebellion, and accept of the terms of Divine Grace and Pardon !

Ah where is our Love to God, if we have little or none to our Brother, who bears his Image ? Where is our Love to the Deity, if we obey not his Commandments ? And this is one of his Commandments, that he who loves God, should Love his brother also, 1 *John* 4. 21.

How dwelleth he in Christ, and Christ, in him, in whom the Spirit of Christ, a Spirit of Love and Charity dwelleth not ? How doth such a Person do what in him lyes to defeat the Prayer of our Saviour, that we might be one as he and his Father are one, we one in Unity of Affection, as they are one in Unity of Divine Essence ; who hates his Brother, or is at variance with him ?

He is not a Christian who hath no true Faith in Christ, and he hath no true Saving Faith, whose Faith worketh not by Love, both towards God, and towards Man.

Hath Christ thought thy Brother worth his Dying for, and dost Thou Ungrateful Wretch think him not worth thy Living for, in all Offices of Love and Kindness towards him? Dost thou consider that thou art no further a Christian than thou art Charitable; and yet professest thou Christianity and continuest Uncharitable? For Shame Man either Quit thy dissembled profession, or else Realize it by acts of Mercy and beneficence.

O what a pattern was Jesus unto us of Love and Good-will, of Real Substantial Acts of kindness! who went about doing Good, made it his chief business and Employment; healing all that were diseas'd both in
Soul

Soul and body : And who herein Recommended his Love, most magnificently Displayed and Illustrated it, in that while we were Enemies he Dyed for us ; and shall not this move us to Live unto him in Obedience to all his Commandments, and particularly to That which he hath Dignified with a more peculiar Recommendation, Calling it His, by way of Eminency above the rest ? This is My Commandment, says He, That ye love one another ; as I have loved you, that ye also Love one another, *John* 15. 12. And oh how can we well do otherwise, who have our Saviours so expressly plain, so frequently inculcated, so pressing and urgent Injunctions of this Duty ; who have his so Illustrious and Transcendent Example for it ; who have the so potent Aids and Assistances of his Spirit of Love unto the performance ! Ah can we deny any thing to the Lord who hath so Dearly bought and Redeemed us ?

Had

Had it been some Hard thing that so Great a Benefactor had enjoyn'd us, would we not have done it? How much more when he bids us Love and be kind to one another? The most Easie, the most Delightfom of all Duties, would we but Try the Experiment!

Ah shall we not do it? Shall not we Christians who have one Faith, one Hope, one Baptisme, one God and Father of us all, one Gracious Mediator and Redeemer; have also one Heart and Good-will to each other? Shall we who are Brethren, Heirs of the same hopes, of the same blessed promises, fall out and Quarrel by the way in our journeying to our Home and Father's House, upon the account of things indifferent and meer Trifles, if compar'd with the Substantials of Religion? Shall we violate Charity that most weighty Vital part of Christianity, for meer Circumstances

stances and Externals of Divine Worship? of no worth in themselves, but only as made Assistant to Piety and Devotion?

What though we are not all of the same mind in matters un-essential to Religion, as indeed how should we be, unless of the same size of Understanding? Does however our Difference of Judgment lay on us any fatal Necessity to Differ also in Love and Affection? Though we are not all of one Mouth speaking the same things, yet cannot we be all of one Heart? We shall never be of one mind, till in Heaven we behold things in one and the same Light, or at least each of us in a Sufficient one; but we both may and ought to be of one Good-will on Earth. Ah that our Little Differences in opinion concerning Rites and Ceremonies, should contribute more to our Divisions, than our General Agreement in

in fundamental Doctrines (which we all acknowledge able to make us wise unto Salvation) does conduce to our Union and Coalition ! While our Minds Agree in Christ in the Essentials of his Religion, let our Wills also be conjoyn'd ; for what an Absurdity is it, that we who are to live together in Heaven, if our Uncharitableness hinder not, should live at variance here below ?

O Heavenly *Samaritan*, Thou holy Jesu, Prince of peace, Look down, Look down ; behold here a miserably torn and Divided Church ; torn with Schisme and Faction , fallen among Robbers and Spoilers , who most inhumanely have Entreated her ; behold with a succouring compassion her bleeding wounds, which are as so many Mouths importunately begging it : Pour thy suppling Oyl and Wine of Union into her Seres, bind up with the bond of Love
and

and Concord her broken and Dis-
joynted Members; Pass not by on
the other side of the way, as did
the Relentless *Levite*, but let the
Distress'd sight of our misery move
thee to compassion, and thy Com-
passion produce a Speedy Relieving
us.

Suppress in us, blessed Saviour,
Entirely banish from us that Stingy
Selfishness of Spirit, that narrow
Confinement of Love to a Sect or
Party which so much abounds in
the Nation, and make us of a more
publick Generous Temper, more
Consultive of the Good of the Com-
munity both in Church and State:
And then the Spirit of God, the Spi-
rit of Love and Unity shall dwell
amongst us; Love shall be our Guide,
and Love shall be our Guard and De-
fence; Love shall fit us for Heaven,
and Love shall Conduct us thither:
Nay Love shall bring down Heaven
upon

196 *On Love and Charity*

upon Earth unto us ; shall make us
live in Peace, in Amity, in a Joyous
Complacency at each others Happy-
ness. *Amen, Amen.*

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The Prayer.

OUR God, who hast taught us that all our doings without Charity are nothing worth, that he only who dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in Thee, and Thou in him; send thy Holy-Ghost, and pour into our hearts that most Excellent Gift of Charity, the very bond of Peace and of all Vertues; make us Children of thee our God, Disciples of our Dear Lord and Master, in loving one another, as he hath loved us; in being Merciful, as Thou our Heavenly Father art Merciful.

O that the same mind may be in us which was in Christ Jesus, who went about doing Good; healing the Diseas'd,

*cas'd, comforting the Afflicted, com-
 passionating the Distressed; and whose
 pity did not content it self with a bare
 saying, Be ye warmed, be ye cloathed,
 be ye filld, and deliver'd from your
 Sufferings; but which did always Exert
 it self in Real Acts of Mercy and Be-
 neficence: O make us also thus fol-
 lowers of our Redeemer's Steps, being
 Exceeding pittysful and compassionate,
 and actually employing all our abilities
 for our necessitous Brethrens Succour
 and Relief.*

*Give us we beseech thee, O most mir-
 ciful God, such a Sympathizing Ten-
 derness of Spirit, that we may be deep-
 ly affected with both the miseries and
 prosperities of our Neighbours; mourn-
 ing with those that mourn, and Rejoy-
 cing with those that Rejoyce, as Living
 Members of our Saviours mystical bo-
 dy, his Church: O that it may become
 the Center of Unity and Concord, the
 very Joy and Delight of the whole
 Earth.*

Fulfil

The Prayer.

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Fulfil O Lord, that promised blessing of thine unto the Christian State, whereby the Wolf is to dwell with the Lamb, the Leopard to lie down with the Kid, the Calf and the young Lyon together; a little Child to lead them, a weaned Child to put his hand on the Cockatrice-Den, and nothing to hurt or destroy in thy holy mountain; but all fury, malice, and bitterness being done away, Gospel-Love, and Peace, and Gentleness of Spirit is to succeed: O may this Gracious Promise be near its Accomplishment; may this blessed State, this Kingdom of thy Dear Son come Quickly.

O thou Composer of differences, thou God of all Peace, Compose those unhappy Animosities which are too much propagated among Christians, let them not any longer Dishonour thy Name, bring an evil Report upon our Holy Profession in General, nor weaken the Interest of the Protestant Religion in particular: But grant that by Brotherly Love

Love and Concord we may Adorn the Gospel of our Saviour, may win over Converts thereunto, and thereby Enlarge, Strengthen, and Advance the Kingdom of the Ever-blessed Jesus.

Let the Peace of Thee our God Rule in our Hearts, to the which we are call'd in one and the same hope of an Heavenly Inheritance; that as we have one Lord, one Faith, one Baptisme, one God and Father of us all; so we may henceforth be all of one Heart, and of one Soul, united in one holy bond of Truth and Peace, of Faith and Charity.

And being thus Studious of Emulating each other in kindness, provoking thus one another to Love and Good works, and being in such a manner the Sons of Peace on Earth, we shall be fitted and made meet for the joynt participation of Heavenly Glory, where

The Prayer.

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*may we all Reign Rejoycing in each
others Happyness as Sincerely, if not
Equally as in our own. Amen, Blessed
Jesus, Amen.*

Meditation

Meditation XV.*On Improvement in Grace.*

THE Life of Grace is best evidenc'd by Growth therein; Spiritual Life no more than the Natural one can subsist without Activity and progressive Motion; where-ever the seed of God is sown in Truth and Reality, it will fructifie and become prolifick: In the School of Grace, as well as in that of Humane Learning, not to Go forward and make improvement is to Go backward; and Vertue, like a tender young Plant, if it does not Thrive and Flourish

Flourish, is in a Tendency to Decay and Wither.

The slothful unprofitable Servant who did not improve his Talent, is in the Scripture-reckoning, in our Lord and Saviour's account nigh as bad, and as severely punish'd, as the unjust Steward, who wickedly embezzled it ; and not to make use of Grace, is here reputed the same thing as not to have had it ; To have it by Exercise and Improvement is judg'd by God the only true Possession ; and he who has not the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit in this manner, is said in Holy Writ only to seem to have them : And instead of encreasing their Store, 'tis denounced there that he shall loose even those measures of Divine Vertues which were once afforded him.

Genuine Grace cannot stand at a stay ; if it does not Ascend and improve,

prove, it infallibly Declines : And when God gives us this Talent to Trade withal and encrease it, shall we frustrate his End of Giving it by letting it lye Dead and unexercised ? Did Christ purchase us the Graces of the holy Spirit, at the Dear and inestimable Rate of his own Blood-shed, and shall we Neglect them when so purchased ? Did He by his precious Death, and All-prevalent Intercession procure the Effusion and sending down of those Graces, and shall we slight them when so sent and bestow'd on us ?

Ah what will not obstinate Ingratitude of Sinning do ! It will make us turn the blessed means of Grace into occasions of Damnation ; make what was intended towards us a Saviour of Life unto Life, to become the Saviour of Death unto Death ; through our mad folly, and supine Negligence !

If we would but cooperate with Divine Grace, would but duely Exercise those proportions of it we Already have, we should soon find larger ones flowing in upon us from Above, and we should have more Abundantly of God's Spirit; If we would but water and cultivate upon his implanting Gracious Dispositions in our Souls, he would give Encrease to them, and perfect them into holy Habits; for former measures of Grace well comply'd with, fit and Qualifie us for further Succeeding ones; and the Sanctifying Light of the Holy-Ghost, like that of the Sun, shines in upon every Eye of the humane Understanding which will open to Receive it.

And therefore whenever we find a Good Motion in our Hearts, let us remember 'tis afforded us to improve that Good Disposition into a vertuous

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Act,

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Act, and to Grow thereby in Grace; when-ever we find a check of Conscience against Sin, a Restraining suggestion of God's Spirit, let us carry it on till we arrive to an Hatred of that Vice; let us proceed from an hatred of it to a Resolution of Amendment, and from that to an actual Endeavour against the particular iniquity.

We are accountable to God not only for that measure of Grace we have Receiv'd, but also for further Degrees thereof, which had we well-managed the present ones, we should have been made partakers of; and therefore not only the mis-using Divine Gifts we were possessors of, but likewise the hindrance by that mis-usage of God's bestowing on us future ones, will be charged upon us to our Condemnation, if we set not to the work and improve present Gracious intrustments. And what should

should hinder us from doing it? The Difficulty of such an undertaking? Alas! this is Lessen'd by the Divine Aids proffer'd, and which will certainly Assist us in the performance. And what, I pray, can seem Grievous, when an Almighty power lends an helping hand to alleviate the Burthen?

Ah it argues a weak and Low Measure of Grace to Covet after so much of Holiness only, as will barely exempt us from Hell, and carry us to Heaven! Such a mean Spirited person in Religion, shews that Grace is not his desire upon its own account, upon its pure intrinick worth, but meerly as it frees him from Divine punishment; 'Tis not for Love of the former, so much as for fear of the Latter, that he would be partaker of Holiness at all: but ah how little do they deserve Eternal Glory, who are not desirous of the most

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Essential part thereof, Divine Grace, in an encreasing Measure ! Ah be there Different Degrees of Celestial Blessedness attainable, by different Degrees of Piety, and shall not this raise in us an holy Emulation, a Godly Ambition to Aim at Heroick Extraordinary Measures of Goodness ? At the very Highest procurable ?

Let us consider that the Longer the credited Loan of Grace remains in our Custody unimproved, the Greater daily will Grow its Debt, and the more ample and enflamed the Reckoning which we shall at the End of all things be call'd to give in ; and then to whom much was Given, of him shall much be Required ; and whether we have put out our Talents of Grace to Usury or no, yet Interest and Encrease of them will be demanded at our hands : It being that we should have been
 busied

busied about the procuring, however we have left it unprocured.

Then at the Day of final Accounts it will not be Enough to say, Lord, here is what is Thine, what thou committedst to my Trust; but where is the Improvement of it, where is the multiplying of it will be Enquired? O then rest not Satisfied with present Attainments, with weak unprogressive Measures of Sanctity, but forgetting the things in Religion which are behind, which are already arrived unto, let us press forward to the mark for the Prize of our high Calling in Christ; endeavouring after the perfecting of Holiness in God's Fear: And then He who is an overflowing Fountain of Grace and Goodness, and who communicates of it where ever he finds Subjects Capable of his Communications, will cause us to proceed

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ceed from Strength to Strength in
Holyness, from one Degree of Grace
unto another, till he has compleated
our Renew'd Nature, and fitted us
for Eternal Glory. *Amen, Amen.*

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The Prayer.

O Thou Divine Fountain and Dispenser, Thou Author and Finisher of every Good and perfect Gift, perfect we beseech thee that Good work of Grace which Thou hast begun to work in us, carry it on to a full Growth and Maturity; Assist us Holy Inspirer so constantly from Above, that we may be always in our Thoughts and Affections there; that whatever Good Thoughts are at any time suggested to our Minds, may Spring up into fixt Principles, and all our heavenly desires may become a New-Nature, the constant Tenour and Temper of our Spirits; and all our holy purposes and Resolutions may Advance into a serious

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practice

practice and Zealous Exercise of Godliness; and all our pious Actions may improve into confirm'd Habits, may become more free, chearful, vigorous, and Delightsome. O may we evidence the Sincerity of Grace within our hearts, by a daily Growth and Encrease thereof may we Evidence our selves to be Alive unto God, to be Quicken'd by thy Spirit, by a Religious motion and progression.

Make us, O God, who are thy Husbandry, like unto Trees planted by the Rivers of water, which bring forth fruit in their due season; O Suffer us not to be like Trees without fruit, twice Dead, pluckt up by the Roots; but grant that our Leaf of holy Profession may never fall, nor our Good fruit wither, but that whatever pious work we take in hand it may prosper: Grant that the more we Advance in years, the Greater progress we may make in Grace, that we may bring forth much fruit of Righte.

Righteousness in our mature Age, and may then be chiefly fat and well-liking, as to our improvements in Holiness.

O blessed Lord, give us to become thus more and more Like thee, partakers in a larger measure of thy Divine Nature and Excellencies; Give us to hunger and thirst more after Righteousness, that we may in an higher Degree be Satisfied therewith; Give us to lay up to our selves Treasures of Grace for Heaven, rather than Treasures of Mammon upon Earth; to multiply and encrease our Spiritual Talents, to Grow Rich in Faith and Good Works, to Rise up to a fulness of Stature in Christ Jesus, to walk worthy of thee our God unto all well-pleasing, perfecting of holiness in thy fear; to be fill'd with all the fruits of thy Spirit which accompany Salvation: That these things being in us and Abounding, an Entrance may

*be administred unto us abundantly
into the Everlasting Kingdom of our
Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. A-
men, blessed Saviour, for thy Cross
and Passion Sake. Amen.*

Meditation

Meditation XVI.

On DEATH.

DEath! the very Thoughts, the very Name thereof, strikes us with Horror and Affrightment! but alas the first Temporal Death, what is it if compared with the second Eternal one? which is to be the sad Portion of all finally impenitent Sinners!

Were the Temporal Death the End of all things with us, did it Determine and Annihilate our Beings, it would be so far from becoming affrightful to the Wicked and

Im-

Impenitent, that they would rather gladly Welcome it, as the Rescuer of them from what they most feared, a Penal Retribution for all their heinous Provocations in this Life; but the Consideration that the first Death is only an Inlet unto, a Beginning of the Second, which is never to have an End; Oh how must this prove doubly affrighting to the Person unprepared for the Temporal, and therefore obnoxious to the Eternal Death! both reluctant Nature and Guilt causing him to Dread it.

The acute Dolours of an expiring Sinner's Body, make him Wish to Dye, but then the more torturing Terrors of his awaken'd Conscience, urge him to retract those Wishes, and to fear nothing more than a Dissolution, which will bring him to Judgment and Eternal Condemnation; and thus the Dyeing Impenitent is rackt and tortured between contra-

ry Desires and Choices, the Guilty Agonies of his Mind pain him more than all the Convulsive Severities of his Disease ; so that they Anticipate his Hell on Earth, and give him to feel some of its Torments, before he goes hence to Experience them in the Gross !

But with the Righteous Godly Person it is not so ; Death indeed to him may look at first somewhat affrightful, it being an abhorrence to Nature, a forcible Separation of Soul and Body, those Dear Companions ; but then being prepared for Death, he living in a continual pious Expectation of it, Faith, Animating and Confirming Faith, strips in his sight that King of Terrors of all his Dismaying Gashlineſs, ſhews him with his Sting the Guilt of Sin, totally pull'd out by the ſatisfactory Sufferings of our Saviour, bids the Good Man walk through the Valley

ley of the Shadow of Death, and fear no Evil ; Gives him a Delightful Prospect beyond the Grave, Admonishes him to look forward to that Immortal Life, and Joy, and Glory set before him ; and in fine, Represents to him a blessed Reunion of Soul and Body at the General Resurrection, never to part, never to be separated again.

Death to such a one is as a Welcome Night of Repose after the hard Labour and Toil of the Day : They Rest from their Labours, says the Scripture : 'Tis as the Enjoyment of the Promised Land, after a forty Years wearysome Wandring in the Wilderness ; nay, 'tis infinitely more ; 'tis the Introduction into an Heavenly *Canaan* ; and Oh how Transporting must it be to have Shot the perillous Gulph of Death, and to be safely Landed on the Eternal Shoar ! To look back with Pleasure on the

Wrecks

Wrecks and Dangers we have happily escaped, and to find our selves all on a suddain surrounded with New unexperienc'd, unheard of, and before unconceivable Enravishments ! Oh who would not Gladly Dye, to become Possessor of such an Inheritance ? who would not gladly Live in perpetual Mortification here, to be made Partaker of such Infinite Delights in a Future State ? Oh Our Life which we falsely so call, deserves not so Good a Name ; Our Life on Earth, is but a Death compared with the Eternal Life and Blessedness Above ! They only Live, who being freed from the Fetters of the Body, from the corruptible Principles of Mortality, are out of a Capacity of Dying any more, and enjoy the utmost Delights, with a full Assurance of ever enjoying them !

But here in the midst of Life we are in Death ; not only lyable thereunto,

unto, but in an Actual Tendency towards it; We draw in Vital Aire, only to breath it out again; and sleep, the liveliest Image of Death, is the best Repairer of our Life; by reason of which frequent Repairs, our Life seems no other than a successive Living and Dying: Nay, our very Health, the height thereof what is it, but the next step to a Declination into Sicknes? many times an immediate Cause and Occasion thereof; for when the Blood runs highest, thence often proceeds a Feavour; and too Great a Quantity of Spirits may prove fatal, as well as the want of them: Just as an House may fall oppress'd with too much bulk and weight, as well as through Weakness and Slightness of Building.

Ah then that Men who live in continual Hazard of Dying, should yet demean themselves with such careless Security, as if they were e-

ver to Live ! Ah that upon this moment, for ought we know may Depend our happy Eternity, and yet we squander away whole Days, and Years in Vanity ! O when shall we become wise, and consider profitably our Latter End ? When shall we so number our perishing days, as to apply our hearts unto Godly Wisdom ? Time passes on, though we mind it not, improve not its passing ; Time passes on, and brings us every instant the nearer to Eternity : O how ought we to take care that it bring us to an Eternity of Blessedness : That the end of our Days prove to us the end of our Hopes, even the Salvation of our Souls !

Alas what Vanity of Vanities, what meer Nothings at the hour of Death, will all things here below appear unto us, which Now look so charming, and take off our minds and endeavours from providing for
our

our happy Departures ! How then will all our pursuits, all our possessions of Honour, of Riches, and Pleasure, appear as a Dream, as a vanishing Shadow ; so that we shall at that time account the wisdom of this world folly and madness ; shall wish, with Earnestly that with all our other Gettings we had Gotten more Religious Understanding ; had layd up larger Comfortable Treasures of a good Conscience, had been as industrious for the Concerns of another Immortal Life, as for those of this vain Transitory one !

Let us therefore take Advice of Death in time of health ; Death is a faithful Counsellor, and will not Deceive, will not flatter us ; and seeing 'tis necessary for us to Dye one time or other, and as necessary unto Dying well, that we often meditate upon Death, let us make it the frequent

quent Subject of our thoughts, and in such manner view things Now, as they will certainly appear to us at our near approach towards Death.

O may we not live in such a state wherein we would be unwilling to be Surpriz'd by Death, unwilling to be call'd to Dye, before we have liv'd to any good purpose; but may we through the Spirit mortifie the Deeds of the Body, that we may be made Alive unto God; What we would wish were done when Dying, let us do that Good and vertuous work at present; and what wish were undone then, let us shun that wicked performance now; or if performed, undoe it by Repentance before our latter End overtakes us: So shall we be Ready for Dying, so shall the Day of our Deaths appear better to us than the day of our births; we coming into the world

world crying, as born to Labour and Sorrow; but going out of it Rejoycing, as assured to find Rest, and Ease, and Enravishment of Soul. *Amen* blessed Saviour, Thou Resurrection and the Life, *Amen, Amen.*

The

The Prayer.

O Holy Jesu, thou Lord of Life and Glory, who by thy Death hast overcome Death, and open'd unto us the Gate of Everlasting Life, at the hour of Death, and in the Day of Judgment, Good Lord Deliver us; Grant that the End of our life on Earth, may be the Beginning to us of a blessed Eternity in Heaven; that the second Death, the never-ceasing one may have no Dominion over us; but that when we discontinue Living with men, we may dwell with thee our God, and Converse with all the blessed Society Above.

Grant, Heavenly Father, that when we come to lye on a Death-bed, we may
be

be able to look backward with Comfort and Consolation on a well spent Life, and forward with a bright prospect of Glory and Immortality, beyond the Grave; that when we are nigh unto Death, and our bodily strength Languishing, our faith and hope may Revive and become vigorous; and we may then feel the joyous Approaches of that Salvation, which we before had wrought out with fear and trembling.

We know, O Lord, that 'tis appointed for all men once to Dye, and that no one can rescue his life from the pit of Destruction; and yet do we live as if we had made an Agreement with Hell, and had an unforseitable Lease of our lives? O give us to Dye unto sin Now, that we may sleep in Christ at our Departure; and be Awaken'd, be Rais'd to life again in the Restitution of all things. Afford us some Refreshing beams of the Light of thy Reconciled Countenance, when passing through

through the dark valley of the Shadow of Death; grant that we may then fear no evil, but may have the Testimony of a Good Conscience which may be a supporting Cordial to our weak and fainting Spirits: Grant that we may not live in such an unprepar'd state of Soul, as that we should be afraid to Dye, and Appear before thy Judgment-seat; but cause us so to Demean our selves, as that the Sting and Terrour of Death Sin may be taken away, before Death it self lays hold on us; that when it comes, we may welcome it with Smiles and Gladness; may lift up our heads with Joy at our hastening Dissolution, as knowing that then the time of our Redemption draweth near.

Be Thou present with us at the hour of Death O blessed Jesu, who sufferedst Death for us upon the Cross; by the vertue of that thy precious Death, Sweeten we beseech thee the bitterness of ours: When our Eyes shall be Darkned in the Agonies

Agonies of Death, kindle in our hearts the Light of Saving Faith; when our Speech shall fail and leave us, O do thou speak Inwardly unto us by the Comforts of thy Spirit, and grant that we may speak mentally unto Thee by Devout Sighs and Groans which cannot be uttered; when we are nigh unto the End of our Days, may we be nigh the end of our Hopes, even the Salvation of our Souls: O give us in our last Extremities Joy in believing, Hope in our Latter End, humble Resignation of our Spirits into thy hands, an holy Contempt of this Earth, an Enflamed Love of Heaven, Longing desires to be with Thee, with our Saviour Christ, with Angels and Glorified Saints, which is much better than being here. Amen, Amen, for thy Mercies sake.

Meditation XVII.

On the Last Judgment.

MEthinks I view the Judge of the whole Earth, Terrible and yet Gracious, coming in the Clouds of Heaven with all his Glorious Retinue of holy Angels ; methinks I hear the Arowzing Call of the last Trumpet ; see the innumerable Dead take the Alarm, Awake, Move, and Rise at its all-powerful Summons.

I behold methinks the Righteous
Rising first with Smiles and Exulta-
tion in their Faces ; as knowing that
L their

their Redemption, that the Reward of all their Pious Labours draweth near : I behold also the ungodly Rising Last, and yet even then most unwillingly ; shaking and trembling for fear of their approaching Tryal and Condemnation ; Heaven above Threatning them, Hell beneath Gaping wide for their Reception. I behold too the Court-Book of an Universal Registry open'd, each Mans Indictment and Accusation publickly Read, his own Conscience, the while bearing Witness, and either Accusing or Excusing him in that fearful Judgment !

I hear methinks the Decisive Sentence pronouced of either Eternal Happyness or Misery, of either come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepar'd for you before the foundations of the World ; or else of Depart from me ye Accursed into Everlasting

Everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels !

Oh the different Effects these different Sentences have on the Persons they are directed unto ! The Righteous receive their Sentence with Joy and Acclamations, with transporting Thanks and Hallelujahs, with an humble Admiration that the Recompence of their finite Defective Services, should be a far more Exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory ! The ungodly Reprobates entertain their Doom with hideous Howlings and Lamentations, with heart-piercing Sorrows and Affrightments, with fruitless desires to return again into their Graves, or to be perfectly destroyed and Annihilated.

Come ye blessed ; O Delightful sound, O wellcome hearing ! wellcome especially from the mouth of our Judge ! Come ? There is no need

sure of a pressing Invitation to accept of so much Bliss and Happyness; behold they Run, they draw near upon the first Intimation of it; they fly with haste into the possession of their Eternal Inheritance!

They now please themselves in the Remembrance of their former Godly Sorrows, Mortifications, and Self-denials, which through the Mercy's of God, and Merits of their Saviour, have procured them such an exceeding Great Rejoycing! All their former Tears dry up at the sight of their Glorious Redemption, and they would not for a World but they had Denied themselves in the Life past, that now in the Resurrection of the Just, they may be own'd and Approved of by their Advocate and Acquitter.

Depart ye Cursed; blessed Lord whither should they depart? Can they
Goe

Goe any where where thou art not present, who fillest all things? tho' they descend into the Deep, and remain in the uttermost parts of the Sea, yet Thou art there; though they make the Darknes of Hell their hiding-place, yet thou art there also; thine Omniscient Eye shall even there find them out, and thine Almighty Arm shall punish them /

Depart from Me; A Departure from thy Beatifick presence, O God, must needs render the Departed Accursed; for Thou art all that's Good, the Loss therefore of Thee is an Universal Loss: Thou art the Center and Rest of the Soul; and therefore to be separated from Thee must be the most unquiet and miserable Condition imaginable. A Departure from the Joyous Light of thy Countenance, O blessed Jesu, who only hast the words of Eternal Life, can certainly be no other than Eternal

Death. One would have thought indeed that to be Deprived of Thy Sight, might have been punishment enough, without the Damned's Entrance in Hell-flames and tortures; but that besides the mental Anguish for their Loss of the Enjoyment of God, for their Loss of Heavenly Joys unspeakable, and full of Glory, they should be tormented with the positive sufferings of infernal Regions; should be banish'd into fire, into fire Everlasting, into fire Everlasting prepared for the Devil and his Angels, the worst of Company, the most Dismal Society; Oh, how Doubly afflictive and vexatious must this prove unto them!

We believe, O Lord, all this most solemn process of a final Judgment, we believe and tremble thereat; O make it an ingenuous fear converting our Souls: We behold with an Eye of faith this thy Judiciary Tryal
and

and Enquiry as clearly, as if it was the Object of our bodily vision ; O Grant it may have such an Effectual influence upon our hearts, as to make us live in continual Expectation of it ; as if the last Trump were already sounding in our Ears, and we saw the Graves open'd, the Dead coming forth, and the Divine Judge Seated on his Dreadful Tribunal !

May our habitual mindfulness of this Day of future Reckoning, cause us to place a watch over our most Secret Thoughts, a Guard over our most Innocently pleasant words, over our most conceal'd Retired actions ; always remembering that God is about our path and our bed, and will bring every Secret thought and purpose of the heart into Judgment, with every Idle word, and most clandestine performance.

O the brightness of the Discoveries of that time of Tryal ! How Searching , how penetrating ! No Defence, no Palliation, no Denyal, will that Day serve either to countenance or to cover our unrepented sins ; in vain will it be to offer at either Excuse or Concealment ; the Darkness of hidden wickedness shall appear no Darkness at all , but shall be unto God as clear as the Noon-day.

Then shall not a well-dissembled Hypocrisie in Religion, any longer pass for Sincerity, and the power of Godliness ; then shall not habitually indulged vicious appetites and passions any longer pass for pardonable humane Infirmities ; a bare Negative holyness, the not having done any Enormous evil, shall not then Satisfie for the want of Real Positive piety, for the want of having done all the Good

Good we could ; neither shall bare Desires after Grace, without the effectual Endeavours, be reputed Grace it self : But all false Disguises shall be taken off from both our selves and others, and a Man shall be accepted only for that he Really hath of Vertue and Goodness, not for that which he seem'd to have of it in this World, but truly had not.

The Just shall then be Hardly found Just ; the Righteous shall Scarcely be Saved ; O where then shall the Sinner and Ungodly appear ? How shall they Stand, as Justified, when Judged ?

O may we in serious thoughtfulness thereon, fancy our selves before the Judgment-Seat of Christ ; may we Examine our selves whether we are Ready prepared for the giving up our Accounts ? Whether our Lives are able to bear a strict Scrutiny at

238 *On the last Judgment.*

the Day of our Judges Appearance? What holy work we would then more especially desire to be found Eminent in? And that let us Now more peculiarly be busied about; what it is we would then be most Ashamed of, and wish it had never been acted, or sincerely Repented of? And that let us Repent of Immediately, in this our season of Grace and Salvation: May we think no Religious pains too Great, no Self-denials too severe, no Addresses to Heaven too frequent or too fervent, to render us provided for our future Tryals; but may we enter at present into Judgment with our selves, Accusing and Condemning our own ways, that when we shall appear before the Great Judge, he may find that before-hand we are accused and Judged.

Let us often meditate, Lord who can Stand before Thee when Thou
art

art Angry? Who can be cleared
when judged, shouldst not thou in
the midst of Judgment remember
Mercy? Woe were it to the most in-
nocent unblameable Life, if Thou O
God, laying aside thy Clemency,
shouldst sit and Judge it Rigo-
rously. !

The

The Prayer.

O Blessed Saviour, Thou most Righteous Judge Eternal, ordained by thy Father to be Judge both of the Quick and Dead, whereof he hath given us Assurance; in that he hath raised thee from the Dead; O Raise us from the Death of sin unto the Life of Righteousness, and hereby fit and prepare us for the Day of Judgment: Cause us so Effectually to think on it at present, as that we may not Dread its Terrors hereafter, but may be Justified by thy Sentence, and cleared when we are Judged; not Trusting in our own Righteousness, which is but as filthy Rags, but being clothed with the imputed Righteousness,

ousness which is of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. O that when we are Judged we may be found in Him, having an Interest in the Merits of his Death and passion ! O that he who is to be our Judge, may likewise be our Advocate and Acquitter !

Blessed be God the Father, blessed be the holy Trinity, that thou merciful Jesu art to be our Judge, who by Assuming humane Nature, wast toucht with a fellow-feeling of our infirmities, being in all points Tempted as we are, yet without sin ; that thou mightest have Compassion on us thy brethren who are Tempted, and that we might come the more boldly to thy Judgment-seat, finding Grace to help in that Greatest time of Need : O may we obtain Mercy, when our Lord enters into Judgment with us ! May we be Acquitted, when Tryed ! May our Saviour look on all he has Done, on all he has Suffered in our behalf, when making Inquisition

tion what we have done, Spoke, or Thought; and may be for the Satisfaction purchased by his 'Blood, be Gracious unto us.

Give us, Gracious God, so to Accuse and Condemn our selves for sin, by a penitent abhorrence of it, that we may not be Accused and Condemned in thy fearful Judgment; but may stand in the Judgment, as found upright and Absolved therein: O that our own hearts may pass that True Judgment on us in this world, which Thou blessed Redeemer wilt pass on us in the other; and if upon Calling our selves to an Account at present, we find that our Consciences Condemn us, Grant that we may make void that Condemnation by immediate Amendment; considering that if our hearts condemn us, Thou our God art Greater than our hearts, and knowing all things, wilt much more Condemn us.

Alay, holy Saviour, by the pleadings

dings of thy *Mediation* and *Intercession*, the *Rigour* and *Severity* of thy *final Sentence* ; cause us to live as if we ever heard that *arousing Summons* in our *Ears*, *Awake ye dead*, and come to *Judgment* : O make us in apprehension hereof to *Judge* and *Examine* our past *Courses*, and to *Correct* and *Reform* whatever we find *Amis* in them ; let the *habitual Remembrance* of the last *Day of Tryal*, *Quick*en us unto a more than ordinary holy preparation for it : That we may *Expect* it with comfortable *Hope* , meet it with an humble well-grounded *Assurance*, be *Acquitted* in it, pleading our *Lord's* most perfect *Obedience* , and *Relying* wholly on his *Meritorious Expiation* ; and may we at length be blest with the *Enrattising* *Approbation* of well-done *Good* and faithful *Servants* , enter ye into your *Master's Joy*. Amen, Amen.

Meditation XVIII.*On Heaven.*

HEAVEN ! A place where God's Honour dwells, where his Honour and Glory dwell in the most Supereminent Degree ! Where is the blessed Jesus in all the pompous Resplendencies of his Exaltation , Surrounded with infinite Honours of his perfect Obedience, and most meritorious Sufferings : Where the Reflected Rays of the Divine Majesty add New lustre to the brightest Cherubims ; and the innumerable Host of Heaven, the Glorified Company of Saints and Angels , drink plentifully of those Rivers

Rivers of pleasure which are at God's Right hand for Evermore ! Pleasures Refin'd and Spiritual , Sincere and unallay'd with any mixture of Sorrow ; pleasures fixt and Durable as God the Unchangeable Author of them ; so compleat as to Satisfie, and yet so Recreatively Satisfying, as not to become Dull and Cloying : For in Heaven a Continual fresh Addition of Happyness flowing in upon the Soul, both Gratifies its appetites, and also Quickens and New - Excites them.

There the blessed Inhabitants beholding constantly the Beatifick Presence, are changed thereby from Joy to Joy, from Glory to Glory ; Receive incessant Communications of the Divine inherent Fulness, and have their Desires hereby the more Enflamed, their Capacities the more Enlarged to receive still further participations of God's inexhaustible bounty :

bounty : And thus they spend a Rapturous Eternity ; ever-Loving, ever-Praising, ever-Adoring and Delighting in God their Saviour : And the more they Love, and Praise, and Delight in Him, still they find more Cause, more Reason, more Desire and Longing of Soul to do so !

Here 'tis the happy Residentiaries Understandings are wide open'd to all the amazing Lights and Discoveries of Truth, to the Mysteries of Creation and Providence, of Redemption and Sanctification ; to the now puzzling Difficulties of Nature and of Grace, of God's Prescience and Man's Free-will : Here 'tis the Wills also of the Glorified are render'd conformab'e unto, are Swallowed up in, and made one with God's Holy Will and Pleasure ; that their Affections become Seraphickly pure, Spiritual, and fervent ; that both the Spirits of Just Men made perfect, and their

their brethren Angels burn with Divine Love, are enflamed with holy Ardours of Devout Gratitude and Thanksgiving to God the Author of their Beings, and kind bestower and preserver of all their Enjoyments!

Heaven ! The bright Abode of all bright, and pure and clarified Souls ! Of all those who have had Heavenly Tempers and Dispositions implanted in them here ; who have Contemned the World, Triumph'd over its depraving pomps and Vanities ; who have Crucified the flesh, with the Corrupt Lusts and Affections thereof ; who have vanquish'd Hell, overcome the Temptations of the Devil, offer'd a Grateful violence to Heaven, by the importunities of fervent Effectual Prayer, by the Severities of Repentance, Mortification, and Self-denial !

There

There in the happy Regions Above, they reap the fruit of their pious labours, with a plentiful Interest and Encrease of Glory ! There all the Good, all the truly Wise, all the Just, and Chaste, and Charitable Souls, of whom this World was not Worthy, who were burning and shining Lights amidst a crooked and perverse Generation , by their Singularly holy Examples, shine as Stars of the first Magnitude in the Kingdom of Heaven ; they Love God with the Intensest, most Dutiful Affection, and they Love one another as themselves, without any Envy or Repining at their Neighbours happyness, who enjoy a Greater Degree thereof than they ; but each Beatified Spirit enjoying as much of God and Heaven as he is capable of Receiving, is fully Satisfied with his own measure of blessedness, and derives also pleasure and Contentment from the
possessions

possessions of his brethren though more highly Glorified !

There in Heaven they Love, there they Adore, and there they Enjoy for an Endless Duration ; there their United Employ of Loving, Praising, and Worshipping God, of Returning him Thanksgivings for all the Miracles of his Stupendious Love; Unite them the more intimately unto God , and Unite them also more closely in Affections to one another ; a Glorified Saint not repining at the more Advanced Glory of an Angel, an Angel of an inferiour Order, not Grudging at the Happiness of a Superiour ; nor any of those Morning Stars of the Creation, Envyng the Saints their most Illustrious Honour, in having the Humanity Dignified with a Personal Union to the Godhead !

O Hea-

O Heaven ! The Glorious Receptacle of Heaven-born Souls, of the Favourites and Sons of God, when shall I come and Appear before him? When shall I be made more exactly Like unto him, seeing him as he Is? When shall I be joyn'd to the Devout Adoring Quire of Angels? O Celestial Temple, how my Soul Longs to Enter Thee the Holy of Holies ! One Day in thy Courts is better than a Thousand elsewhere ! Gracious God deny me what Thou wilt of this Earth, so thou givest me at last an inheritance in Heaven ; That will make ample Amends for all my wants here below ; That will fully Recompence all the Sufferings of this Mortal Life !

O my Soul, is such a Glorious prize, as that of thy high Calling in Christ set before thee, and shall not
this

this incite thee to press forward to that Mark? To Run the Race of holy Obedience with patience, chearfulness, and a pious Contention? Is such an Heaven, such an Exceeding Great and Eternal weight of Glory, the Object of thy Hopes, and hast thou the Stupidity not to let it be the Object of thine Endeavours also? Hast thou the heart to neglect so Great Salvation? Shall it not encourage and stir thee up to give all Diligence to make thy Calling and Election Sure? Oh how unworthy are they of Eternal Life, who will not Exert their utmost power and industry to obtain it! Blessed Lord, Bring down much of an Heavenly Frame and Temper into our Souls, which may Qualifie us for an Enjoyment of Heaven hereafter; let there be Divine God-like habits of mind wrought and implanted in us at present, that
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Awaking up at the Resurrection after thy Likeness, we may be Satisfied therewith. *Amen, Amen, holy Saviour.*

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The Prayer.

O Sovereign Excellency, and most Exalted Blessedness, whose Delightful Presence makes Heaven, and the hiding away of whose face in Displeasure, is the chiefest Constituent of Hell; O grant that having Such an Heaven, such an Exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory the Object of our Faith and Hopes, we may labour after an Heavenly frame and Disposition in our Souls, which may Qualifie us for the Celestial State hereafter: Grant that we having Given unto us such Great and precious promises as those appertaining to this Life and a better, may by the incitement of these become partakers of thy Divine Nature, escaping

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the Corruptions which are in the World through lust.

O Holy Father, give us a Lively View of Heaven by an Eye of Faith; and so Raise up our minds thither, that we may always have our Thoughts, our Desires, our Conversation there, whence we look for the Saviour; O make us such obedient Subjects of this thy Kingdom of Grace, that we may become capable of thy Kingdom of Glory: Convince us, blessed Lord, that Grace and Glory differ not in Kind, but only in Degree of purity; Grace being Glory in its Dawn, in its progressive light of Sanctification, and Glory being Grace Ripened into Maturity, Consummated into perfection; and therefore as we hope for and would become partakers of Celestial Glory, bring down Holy Jesu much of an Heavenly Temper and habit into our hearts at present: Make us to conceive of Heaven as of a pure and holy State of Life, rather than

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of it as a place and Seat of Enraving
Enjoyments; to Conceive of it as con-
sisting more in the blissful frame and pi-
ous Qualities of our Souls, than in the
fruition of any External Heavenly Ob-
jects; and consequently cause us to be
Equally desirous that Heaven should en-
ter into us by the way of Holyness here,
as that we may enter into Heaven by
the way of Happyneſs hereafter: That
considering Heaven as a place wherein-
to no Unclean thing can enter, consi-
dering it as a City wherein only dwelleth
Righteousness, we may purifie our selves
even as Thou the Author of it art pure,
perfecting of Holyness in thy fear.

O our God, make us more and more
meet for an inheritance with the Saints
in Light and Glory; more and more
Resemblant of such a State in our Spi-
ritual Tempers and Dispositions of
mind: We are as yet in Exile, we are
Strangers and sojourners here, as all our
Fathers were; O make us fit for our

Fathers House, for an Heavenly Countrey, and safely Conduct us thither; whilst on Earth in the midst of Life we are in Death, O cause us to see the Goodness of thee our Lord, in that Land of the Living Above, which only deserves that Name; There, There will be no need of the Sun by Day, neither of the Moon by Night, for the Glory of thee our God will Enlighten it, and in the Light of Thy Countenance we shall be Sure to see Light: O lift up the partial Light of that Countenance upon us at present, causing us to long after a more plentiful manifestation thereof in the Life to come.

Enable us Heavenly Father more to Admire those inexhaustible Treasures of thy Goodness prepared for such as Love and fear Thee, which Eye hath not Seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of Man to conceive; O thy unmeasurable Goodness, whereby we are not only deliver'd from
suffering

suffering the vengeance of Hell-torments, but also made capable of the Enjoyments of Heaven ! What shall we render unto the Lord for these inestimable benefits which he Designs to bestow upon us ? O give us to Conform our selves to thine Image in Holyness, that we may behold Thee our God in Glory, where certainly we can want nothing, where all our Desires and Expectations will be compleatly Gratified ; because Thou our Supream Happynefs will be All in All unto us ! O let us be Thine, and be Thou Ours to all Eternity. Amen, Amen, Blessed Redeemer.

Meditation XIX.

On Hell, and the Eternity of its Torments.

WHAT can the Wrath of God do more than punish with an Eternity of Misery? O the malignity of Sin, whose Short pleasures and Empty profits, whose false Honours and Transient acts of wickedness have an Infinity of punishment their Recompence! O who would buy the pleasures of sin which are but for a moment, at the Dear rate of never-ceasing Sufferings? Who would refuse the initial troubles of a Religious Course, since in the End it frees us from

from the Torments of Hell, and inflates us in all the Joys and Glories of Heaven!

Hell! the punishment of the Disobedient, and Rebellious; of the haters of God, Despisers of Goodness, and wilful Rejecters of their own Everlasting Mercies!

Hell! A place where is Variety of torments, Extremity of torments, and Eternity of torments; not one way, but a Thousand ways to make a poor Soul miserable, Everlastingly miserable: And who can bear Variety? Who can bear Extremity? Who can bear Eternity of torments? And yet all this we must bear, if ever it be the sad lot of any of us to be cast into Hell.

Here a mixture and interchange of Mercies, allays our Afflictions and Occasions of sorrow; but in Hell

there's nothing but pure unmingled misery ; nothing to be seen, but Objects of Terrour and Affrightment ; nothing to be heard, but hideous howlings and Self-Execrations ; nothing to be felt, but utmost pain and torment : Not one merry Day, and one sad ; not one hour of Grief, and another of Ease ; not one Cross and another Comfort, as it fares with us on Earth ; but all Crosses and all Curses without any the least mitigation do concur in Hell, like lines meeting in their proper Center !

• And no wonder they do so ; for 'tis the doleful Residence of the miserably Depraved, and sinfully Degenerate ; of the fearful and unbelieving, of the abominable and Murderers ; of the proud, Angry, malicious and Revengeful : Qualities of mind which are their own torment and Damnation ; which render the unhappy possessors of them Suitable Associates

Associates only for Devils and Reprobate Spirits ; Lost to Goodness, Sunk into the very Dregs of sin and impiety.

O Hell, where nothing Good inhabits ; where Darkness fills both the place and minds of those banished from God's Presence ; blackness of Darkness for ever fills the place, blackness of Guilt, horror, and Despair their Spirits !

Oh the Sense of their Loss afflicts more those wretched Souls, than does the sense of their pain and Anguish ! The sense of what the Righteous enjoy, and of what themselves might have done, had it not been their own fault, afflicts more the Damn'd than do all their Hellish Sufferings ; for that there should be an Heaven which they shall never Enter into, that there should be a God whose blissful sight they shall

ever be excluded from : O this is the bitterest ingredient in Hell ! A Consideration which pains more the Objects of Divine wrath, than all their flames, and fire, and brimstone !

O Eternity, Eternity ! A thing which is a Rack to our minds but to Think of it, even Abstracted from the Notion of annext misery ; how much more Amazing then and Dreadful must be the joynt Consideration of Torment accompanying Eternity !

Ah is it not enough that the Miseries of the Damned are the most Intense and Exquisite, but must they be Endless also ? As Intense, they are intolerable ; as Endless, how much more so ?

Alas, Alas, what are the Greatest Temporal Punishments, when compared with those which are Eternal ?

nal? No more than painted fires and tortures compared with the Real Sensible ones, whereof they are Representatives!

To be miserable as Long as God shall continue to be who is Everlasting; what an insupportable, what an Inconceivable misery is that! And O the Just Judgment of an Incons'd Deity provoakt by Irreclaimable wickedness! Impenitent Sinners Seek Death Eternal in the wilful Error of their ways, they chusing Sin the procuring Meritorious Cause of Everlasting punishment; and therefore what Injustice or want of Goodness can it be in God, to give them their Choice, and torment them with the Damnation of their own Seeking? Since 'tis a Received Maxime, that to him who Wills his own injury, no injury in that respect can be done.

Besides

Besides, the finally Obstinate and Disobedient carry the Foundation-matter of punishment in their own Bosoms, *viz.* their Sinful Unregenerate Nature; and what a wonder is it that the infernal flames should Everlastingly prey upon Never-ceasing Suitable fuel? Or what unequal Dealing in God, that Endless punishment should be the dismal portion of Endless Guilt and Demerit? So long as there is Sin to be punish'd in the Damned, so long of Necessity must Continue their punishment: Nay, should God cease inflicting any Positive Sufferings, should Hell cease its External Torments, yet would an Habitually impure and finally wicked person become an Hell within Himself; his corrupt Lusts and Passions for want of their Suitable vicious Gratifications, would continually Torture and Disquiet him; So that it is not so much God that Condemns the persevering Impenitent to Eternal
Misery,

Misery, as his own Evil Unrenewed Nature ; which continuing for ever Unchanged in the other life , must needs render its unhappy Owner for ever wretched and miserable : Now is it not Righteous, that Incorrigible Obstinacy should be Endlessly punished ? That those who had they Lived for Ever, would have sin'd for Ever, (as it may Reasonably be Supposed all finally impenitent persons would have done) should be Tormented also Everlastingly ?

God proposes to our free and Rational Choice either an Eternity of Misery or Blessedness ; now if Endless Glory be Despised and Rejected, what Remains but Endless Misery to be the Sinners just Lot of Inheritance ? Eternal Misery sure is not more D.sproportionable to a Vicious Life, than Eternal Happyness to a Vertuous ; and therefore since the Reward promised to our Obedience,

is Equal to the Punishment threatned to our Disobedience, and the Sinner has his unconstrain'd Choice of either of these, he acts herein upon the Square or Level; and if he chuses Endless Misery before Everlasting blessedness, 'tis his own most Sottish fault; and he hath no one but himself to complain of for it.

Ah in Hell there will be no Cavilling Objections against the Justice of God's inflicting Eternal Punishment for Temporary acts of Disobedience; but the Sinner standing Self-condemned, will find such Considerations as these some of the bitterest Ingredients in his Torments; viz. the Reflections that he might have been Everlastingly Happy if he would; That Damnation in its Necessary Causes was his own Choice; that the Commandments of God were both Reasonable and Possible to have been kept; That the Heavenly Assistance offer'd

offer'd him, would have made them Easie; and an inward Principle of Divine Love, Delightfulsome; that he had once a Day of Grace and Salvation had he pleased to make Use of it, but that Now the Saving Benefits thereof are lost, through his Carelessness; that the Main Constituent of his torments is the wicked, impure, unconverted Temper of his Mind, and that unless he were Holy, 'tis Impossible for him to be Happy: That he sees the way of Heaven Accessible, by the innumerable Host of Saints, Martyrs, and Confessors which are There; and that he finds Hell was avoidable by feeling his own, and hearing the hideous Self-Exprobrations of all about him: And thus will God be Justified, and the Suffering Impenitent Condemned from his own Mind and Conscience!

Tell

Tell me no more then of Gaining the whole World, and Loosing thereby my own Soul ; That is of more worth, cost more to be Redeem'd, than that it should be barter'd away upon so Slight a Consideration ; Tell me no more of indulging my flesh into Eternal Ruine to my Spirit ; I had rather live a Life of uninterrupted Self-denials and Mortifications, than be *Damn'd* ; than be Exposed to the Death Endless and insufferable !

Oh 'tis this suffering without any prospect , without any hopes of a Release, nay , with a certain Assurance that their torments shall have no period, which is the Hell of Hell to those Despairing Wretches who inhabit it ; who are not only to suffer during all Eternity, but what's more, they suffer the Evils of a Re-probate

probated Eternity, in every moment thereof; by considering each instant that what they now feel of most acute torments, must continue to be their sad portion for Ever; without Allay, without the least Ease or Intermission!

Blessed God, is this the Death which is the Wages of Sin? Is this Endless misery the Conclusion of Short momentary vicious pleasure? O come Pain and Anguish, come bodily Distress and Affliction, so that my Soul may be Saved in the Day of our Lord! Let me but escape Hell hereafter, and Give me my Hell upon Earth. O the heinous Nature, the mischievousness of sin, which leads to this place of Sufferings! May we by the fear of Hell be driven to Heaven; by fear of God's Justice be induced to lay hold
on

on his Mercy . That considering the end of wicked actions, its being Death Eternal; we may break them off by Repentance, which leads to Life Everlasting.

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The Prayer.

O Most Just and impartially Severe Divine Being, who so hatest sin, that thou punishedst it in thine own Son, that thou pursuest it with Eternal Vengeance into another World; O Grant that by thy Threatning of Hell-Torments, we may be preserved from ever coming there; may be deterr'd from those wicked actions which lead directly thither: May we Answer the end of thy creating an Hell, which was by the Affrightment thereof improv'd into Divine obediential Love, to bring us unto Heaven.

Make us blessed Lord, duely sensible, of thy Equal Mercy and Loving-kindness

kindness in preparing a Tophet, a place of punishment for impenitent sinners, as in providing an Heaven, a place of Glorious Recompence, for the perseveringly Good and Righteous; in that thou didst intend by those different Objects of our hopes and fears, to address thy self differently to our various Tempers and Dispositions; and to Drive those to their Duty and Happyness, by thy Denunciations of Vengeance, who would not be Led to it by the promises of future Glory and felicity: O how Graciously hast thou hedg'd in our way to Everlasting Bliss on every side! Using all means that we should not Err and Depart from it! What couldst thou have done for us which thou hast not done? We have an Heaven to Allure to Obedience, we have an Hell to Deter from every wilfull impiety: How utterly inexcusable shall we then be, if we break thorough all these fences and Sanctions of thy Laws.

Put Gracious God thy fear into our inner parts, and make us to Tremble at thy Judgments ; being Awed by them into an holy Caution that we at no time voluntarily offend thee : Knowing the Terrours of thee our Lord , O Grant that we may effectually be perswaded to a breaking off our sins , and an Applying our selves unto Holyness : Give us Grace to Escape as for our Lives out of the filthy Sodom of every wicked impurity, never so much as looking back upon them, with an Eye of complacency, lest the flames due unto them overtake us unawares.

Cause us we beseech thee to flee from sin by the awakening Consideration of its being the only way whereby to flee from the wrath to come ; O may the Eternity of Hell-punishments , restrain both our Inclinations and Embraces from the pleasures or profits of sin which are but for a Season !

Give

Give us often, holy Father, to Ask our selves these Startling Deterring Questions, when about to sin wilfully; How can we do this Great wickedness, and by sinning against God, provoke his infinite Justice and Almighty power to punish us? Who of us can dwell with everlasting burrings? Is it not a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Everliving God, who is a Consuming fire? Is it not a most horrid misery, to be Eternally a seeking Death, and yet never to find it in the Regions of Darkness and Despair?

O cause us to Dread and Abhor sin which leads to this place of infernal torments, as much as the suffering place it self; Cause us to think often on Hell, that we may thereby be kept from falling into it; Grant O holy Jesu, Thou who art the Resurrection and the Life, that we may never fall into the bitter pains of Eternal Death: What else can expose us as fuel to Hell flames but our Sins?

Sins ? They are the combustible matter which the fire which cannot be Quenched will ever be preying upon ; Give us therefore Good Lord, to burn up that immoral he, and straw, and Stubble at present, and then the fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels will have no power over us ; neither will so much as the Smell thereof have past upon us ; but we shall be received into Everlasting habitations of Celestial Glory and felicity. Amen, Amen.

Meditation

Meditation X X.

On Prayer, and the Powerful Efficacy thereof.

PRAYER, 'tis a Duty of Natural Religion and Worship; the Obligation thereunto being founded in the Eternal and immutable Reason of things: In God's Supereminent Excellencies and perfections, and in our own Dependant Indigent Condition as Creatures.

We are born infirm and weak, poor and Necessitous Beings, in Condition Alms-People and Beggars; and therefore to pray alwayes is a Duty incumbent

cumbent on us from the state of our Nature, as well as by the Command and Enjunction of God-Allmighty.

Prayer, 'tis an Acknowledgment of God's Awful Transcendent Majesty, and of our own despicable meanness and imperfection; of his Sovereignty, and our Subjection; of his Self-sufficiency and over-flowing plenitude of Happyness, and of our own penury, straightness of fortune and impotency; of his immaculate Purity and Holyness, and of our Vileness and Corruption by Reason of sinning: And upon these Accounts our Addresses to Heaven ought to be accompanied with all Lowlyness and Humility, with all holy Dread and Reverence.

Prayer being also a Duty of the greatest Importance to us, an instrument of bringing down all manner of Blessings, Temporal, Spiritual, and
N Eternal,

Eternal, ought to be offer'd up with the most fixt Attention of mind, with the most zealous Intention and fervour of Spirit; with the most hearty Sorrow in Confession, the most Earnest Desires in Petition, the most urgent and yet Lowly importunity in Deprecation, with the most Rais'd Joy and affectionate Gratitude in Thanksgiving.

We ought also in Prayer to Exercise an unshaken Faith, Hope, Trust, and Confidence; but however to wait with Patience and Dependance, with an humble Submission and Resignation to God's will, whether or no he shall be pleas'd to Gratifie the Desires of our hearts, to Answer the requests of our lips.

And to induce us with the greater Willingness and Alacrity to set about this Duty of Prayer, let us consider the mighty Honour and high Dignity
accru-

accruing to us therefrom; for is it not an Honour for us Creatures to be permitted to talk and freely converse with our Creator? Is it not an Honour for us vile worms, for us sinful Dust and Ashes, to be allow'd the privilege of having ready Access at any time to the Supream Majesty of Heaven and Earth, thereby to make known to him our sins, our infirmities, our wants, our calamities and distresses, and hereupon to obtain the pardon of our sins, the healing of our infirmities, the Supply of our pressing wants, the mitigation, or entire Removal of our Distresses?

Consider also the inestimable Benefit of Prayer; 'tis the Channel through which are convey'd all our Mercyes, the best Defensive against impendent Dangers and mischiefs, against Divine Judgments and corrections for sinning: The great Repeller of Temptations, the powerful Subduer

of our vices and evil inclinations, the fruitful improver of our Graces and vertuous Dispositions.

Lastly, Consider together with the Honour and Benefit the great Delight and pleasure resulting from a due discharge of Prayer; for what can be more pleasurable than to maintain a constant Intercourse with the Highest and most Excellent of Beings? Than to hold Communion by Addresses to the Throne of Grace, with our Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, Sanctifier, and Continual Benefactor; and hereby to have the frequent Effects and Emanations of his Goodness and Bignity derived down upon us, and the Devotional Testimonies of our Love and Gratitude Ascending up again unto him? What can be a greater Ease and Refreshing to our minds, than to Disburthen them of the oppressive weight of Guilt contracted, by a free and ingenuous Acknowledgment

knowledge thereof, by humble petitioning for forgiveness of the same, by Deprecation of punishment, and resolutely promising by the Assistance of God's Grace, never to Repeat the like, or any other wilful wickedness for the future? In fine, what more Delightful than to vent our Griefs, our fears, our wants, our Anxieties, and Distresses into the Ears of our Heavenly Father, one so Tender and Affectionate, so True to his word, so mindful of his promises, so Large in Bounty and beneficence; so thoroughly Able, so exceedingly Willing to supply all our wants, to Dry up all our Tears, to Remove all our Affrightments, to Satisfie our Anxieties, and Relieve our sorest Distresses?

Prayer rightly circumstantiated what is't it cannot do? It has subdued Kingdoms, obtain'd promises, wrought Miracles, Stopt the Mouths of Lions,

Quench'd the violence of fire, out of
weakness made Men Strong, Rais'd
the Dead to Life again : It makes at
present through the meritorious Me-
diation of our Saviour, peace both
in Heaven and Earth ; unlocks the
Gates of Divine Mercy, rifles
the Celestial Treasury, brings down
much of its rich Stores unto us ; has
power both with God and Man, and
mightily prevails ; Rendring both
yielding, entreatable, compassionate!

Prayer, 'tis another *Jacobs Ladder*,
which maintains a mutual Commerce
and Correspondency between Hea-
ven and Earth ; 'tis a Burning-Glass
of Divine Love, wherein all the
heats and warmths of a fervently
pious Soul are concentr'd ; wherein
it exerciseth all its Graces with the
greatest vigour and Activity : Exer-
ciseth its profoundest Humility to-
wards God, its firmest Dependence
on him for Supplies and Relief, its
heartiest

heartiest Sorrow for Sin, its strongest Faith in Divine Mercy, its most assured Hope in a Saviour, its most earnest pantings and breathings after Heavenly Communications, its most ardent Love, entire Resignation, and Expectant perseverance in well-doing !

And of all the parts of Prayer, none more Noble and Generous, none more endearing and Acceptable unto God, because none more Disinterested and unmercenary, than Praise and Thanksgiving : Petition respects Good things to come which we stand in Need of ; Deprecation Regards the keeping off, or Removal of those Evils which we apprehend our Sins have righteously deserved ; and therefore Self-Interest as well as Religious Inclination put us upon the frequent use of these parts of Prayer ; but Praise respecting

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purely

purely an Admiration and awful Extolling of the Divine perfections, and Thanksgiving being the making a Grateful Return to God for his manifold favours and Loving-kindnesses past and Come, Praise and Thanksgiving are hereupon the more undesigning, the more free and unselfish acts of Devotion; and consequently the more valuable and worthy in themselves, the more Approved of, and well-pleasing to Heaven.

And indeed what more Just and Reasonable, what more becoming and Suitable, as well as Joyous and Delightful a thing, than to be Thankful for Divine blessings received? Ah since the whole World is but one large Store-house, one Magazine and Treasury of Heavenly Love and beneficence, how ought the World hereupon to be one large Temple, one Universal Quire of Devout

vout Praises and Hallelujahs! Of Thanksgivings as Zealous, Fervent, and Affectionate, as the Divine benefactions which we enjoy, are Great, Prizable, and Important! How ought our fire of Devotion to be like that of the Vestal Virgins, perpetual and unexpiring! How ought the Glowing Embers of an habitually Grateful Temper and disposition to be constantly kept alive upon our hearts, though they are not ever actually breaking forth into a flame!

And indeed Prayer let it have never so much Light, never so much Quickness of thought, and Lustre of Expression, yet if it have not also warmth and Zeal of Affection, 'tis but as the Glimmerings of a Glow-worme, or like those Shining Exhalations which make Men believe they are safe Conducted, when they are leading all the while into Bogs and Rivers, into peril and Destruction.

Devotion if it has not the fire of the Altar, will never prove the Sacrifice of the Altar, such a Sacrifice wherewith God is well-pleased; for 'tis the fervent Prayer alone which is Effectual, and unless Effectual, 'tis of no Value and Advantage: But the fervent Prayer of a Righteous Man Availeth much; it pierceth the very Clouds, Enters into God's Presence, besieges his Throne and Mercy-Seat, and will not turn away, will not give over its Solliciting, till such time as the Almighty hears and gives an Answer, either by a Grant of its Requests, or by as kind and obliging a Denyal!

Importunity at the Throne of Grace, in the Court of Heaven, is not there accounted Troublesomness and Impertinency, Clamour and Ill-manners, as 'tis in Earthly Courts; but Heaven willingly suffers violence, the force and power of Devotion is
Delightsome

Delightful unto it, and the violent importunate Supplicants are those only who take it by force.

When *Jacob* wrestled all night in Prayer with God, the Angel of the Covenant, the Lord Christ Jesus, Such was his Prayers prevalency, Such its holy and Spiritual Charms, that Almighty God could not or would not free himself from them, till such time as *Jacob* ceasing his Prayer, let him Go and Dismist him! *Gen* 32. from 24, to 29. ver.

Since all our Temporal, all our Spiritual blessings, all our Vertuous Abilities, all our Vertuous Inclinations, the very Beginnings, the after-progress, the Entire Completion of our Life of Grace depends so mightily upon the Aids and Communications of Heaven, and these are only to be derived thence by Prayer and a Good-Life; how Assiduous, how Diligent

Diligent, how fervent and importunate ought we to be in the Duty!

Prayer 'tis which Lifts us up Above this Earth, lets us into Heaven, Gives us a Delightful prospect of the Glories therein, makes us talk and utter things as if we had been there; Prayer 'tis which Spiritualizes our Minds, purifies our Affections, Exalts us above this World's cares, or fears, and Sordid Concernments; Prayer, which giving us a fore-taste of the Joys to come, thereby conforms our Relish unto them; makes us Scorn and Despise this world's mean Empty Entertainments, hunger and Thirst after the Noble Satisfying Delights of another Life; which renders us also fit Associates for the pure Intellectual Beings Above, who burn with Devotional Love, Gratitude, and Obedience, and whose Continual Employ it is to Adore, to praise and offer up Thanksgivings to the Divine Parent of their Beings, and Author of all their Enjoyments!

By Prayer 'tis we hold the most Intimate Communion with God, and lye open to all the propitious influences of his Spirit; then 'tis when at our Devotions, that the Sun of Righteousness Christ Jesus ariseth by his Grace with more especial Spiritual healing under his Wings; Dissipates our Darknes of Understanding, mollifies our obduracy of Will, imprints his own most Glorious Divine Image on our Souls!

Then 'tis when engaged in Prayer, that holy Men feel their hearts Glow within them, as if toucht with a coal of Devotion from God's Sacred Altar; now 'tis that they Disdain sin and every Degenerate action; Disdain even the Appearances of Evil; nay even Innocent Earthly Delights: And being Enravish'd with the Divine Love, being transported with Celestial Contemplation, every Vertue in them becomes the more Sprightly and Vigorous, and every Devout passion arises the nearer to Raptu-

Rapturous and Seraphical : So that in Devotion, if ever, doth the Soul make its most powerful Sallys Heavenward, and become whilst in the body as if out of it, having its Affections, its Conversation Above with God!

The

The Prayer.

O Blessed Jesu, who didst instruct thy Disciples in the holy and heavenly Exercise of Prayer, who not only permittest, but Inviteest us miserable and needy Creatures to present our Petitions unto thee; O give us not only Leave and Allowance to pray, but also power and Ability to discharge the Duty Acceptably: What do we mean, O Lord, by praying, if we pray not in the Spirit, with all fervency of Supplication and Thanks-giving? What do we mean by offering this Sacrifice of the Altar, if the flame and fire of the Altar a Zealous Devotion be wanting in us? Ah better were it we were otherwise employ'd, if while we now draw near to thee with our
lips,

lips, our hearts are far from thee; and so our very prayers become turned into sins: O call then home our straggling thoughts, fix our Attention, confirm our faith, raise and enflame our pious Affections; pour forth upon us the Spirit of Prayer and Supplication, that this petitionary oblation may come up before thee as Incense, and this lifting up of our hands may be as an Evening Sacrifice; that this our Religious Address may prove the fervent effectual prayer of the Righteous which Availeth much: Blow therefore holy Spirit of Grace upon the Garden of our hearts, and the sweet-smelling Odours of our Faith and Hope, of our Reverence, Zeal, and holy fervour in prayer shall instantly flow forth.

Grant, O God, that we may pray with understanding, with a due Regard to thy Greatness and Majesty; with a prepared, Deliberate, and Devout temper of Mind, that our prayer may not become

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become the Sacrifice of fools, through our rash unadvisedness ; but that it may prove a Grateful and Acceptable Sacrifice unto Thee : an instrument of holyness, a Restraintive from sin, a Defence against Temptation, a procurer of every Corporal and Spiritual Good Gift : Oh that we might be thus ever worshipping, ever Adoring thee ! Oh that we might pray without ceasing as to the habitual pious frame, and Devout Disposition of our hearts !

But alas, O Lord, how are our souls possess'd with a Spirit of Infirmary ! How are they bow'd down with Listlessness and formality in thy Service ! O raise them up by the fervours and elevations of Devotion ; Quicken them with thy Graces, enflame them with thy Divine Love, purifie and spiritualize their corrupt Earthly Affections : Give us to be in earnest amidst these our Supplications ; Give us to ask blessings of thee so believingly, so fervently, and indefi-

indefinitely, as to Receive them by Asking : Oh that we may set a true value upon this most valuable privilege of Prayer, that our Souls may be filled as with marrow and fatness when our mouths thus praise thee with joyful lips !

Hast Thou, O Lord, promised to prepare the hearts of thy Servants to seek thee, and that then thou wilt Graciously incline thine ear to hear and fulfil their Requests ; and shall not we on our parts contribute what we can to the preparation, and set our selves to worship thee with an holy worship ? Oh suffer us not to let thee Go, permit us not to give over entreating thee, till thou hast Granted us our hearts desires, fulfilled the Requests of our Lips, and blessed us with Spiritual Blessings in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

O that thou wouldst be pleas'd at present to wing our Souls with holy Devotion ; to let down of thy heat, and of
thy

thy Light into them; to create in us upright hearts, and most vehement desires after a fuller Communion with thee in Religious Ordinances: As the Hart panteth after the water-brooks, so may our spirits in heavenly Aspirations, Long and pant after thee, O God! Crying out, Oh when shall we come and appear before God? When shall we see and experience of his beauteous, of his comfortable Goings forth in the Sanctuary, as in former seasons?

Grant, O munificent Jesus, with whom the most urgent importunities are very Acceptable and Delightful; grant that we may obtain all convenient Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal blessings, by the humble violence of fervent unceasing Application.

O thou God of all Consolation, thou fountain of Blessedness, who Delightest to Grant the meek and Lowly desires of the Indigent, Dependant Creatures, Enlarge our hearts in this thy Service;
Give

Give us to taste of the sweets of Devotion, let us experience the mighty efficacy of prayer : O suffer us not to come down from this holy mount of exalted praise and Adoration, till it has proved a mount of Transfiguration unto us ; till we are made thereby more Resemblant of thy Divine Nature in Purity and Holiness. Oh may we take such a prospect of the promised Land of Rest and Happiness above, from the towering Ascent of Prayer, that we may Anticipate the Joys Celestial, may contemn these Earthly vanities, and disdain every meanner Satisfaction, than what thou our God, the things Spiritual, and Eternal can yeild us.

Accept, holy Father, of this as a Tribute of Thanksgiving for all thine inestimable benefits from time to time conferr'd upon us ; Accept of this poor unworthy Retribution, but however all that our Indigency and Poverty, all that thy self-sufficiency and fullness will allow

us to pay thee : O may we Live and Dye
thus pouring out our souls to thee in hum-
ble Supplication and Gratulatory praises:
And when we have pray'd, and prais'd,
and adored thee our utmost, our appoin-
ted measure here on Earth, O Grant we
may be taken up into Heaven ; and
there be joyn'd to the Eternally praising,
worshipping, and Adoring Quire of Glo-
rified Saints and Angels. Amen, for
our Redeemer's sake, Amen, Amen.

A
P R A Y E R
F O R T H E
M O R N I N G.

Most Great, most Glorious,
and Gracious Lord God;
Glorious in Majesty, fear-
ful in Power, infinite in Holiness;
with what holy Awe and Reverence,
with what pious Humility and Pro-
stration of Soul, ought we vile Crea-
tures, we sinful Dust and Ashes, to
approach this thy more immediate
Presence!

Lord, what is man that thou art
mindful of him, or the Son of man
that

that thou so Regardest him, as to watch over him with thy Good Providence ; as to visit him with thy faithfulness in the Night-season, and with thy Loving-kindness every Morning : O how indebted are we to thy Goodness and Forbearance, that we are yet in the Land of the Living, praising thee ! We pray thee make this thy Goodness and Long-suffering instrumental to the leading us, out of a principle of Gratitude, to a more compleat and advanced Repentance.

Blessed be thy Name for the Protection afforded us the Night past, for thy Renewed Mercies of this Day ; O Grant that they may Excite us to a Renewing of our holy purposes and Resolutions of stricter and better Obedience for the future ; may thy Adding days to our Lives, cause us to Add Diligence to our religious endeavours : Give us Grace to spend our present continued season

son in such a Godly manner, as if it were to be our Last; as Ready prepared against its being such: Let not we beseech Thee the increase of our years, contribute to the increase of our Guilt, and Number of our Sins; but cause this further indulged space of Time to be so well-improved by us, as that it may bring us the nearer to an happy Eternity.

But, O our God, how have we given thee occasion by our Abuse of former means of Grace, and opportunities of Salvation, to Deny us any further ones, and to cut us off in the midst of our Transgressions! How mayst thou resolve in thy wrath, having been so Long Grieved, so Long Resisted by our sinful obstinacy, that thy holy Spirit shall not Allways strive with such Refractory Offenders!

The

The Number of our Impieties is Great, the Heinousness of them much Greater ; we have forgotten thee too too often, have sinn'd against thee Days without Number, tho' thou hast pardon'd, hast Spared us days without number ; though thou hast given us our Being, though thou hast plentifully provided for our well-being, yet have we forgotten thee ; though thou hast given us thy Son to Redeem us, though thou hast given us thy Holy-Ghost to Purifie, Assist, and Comfort us, yet have we ungratefully Rebell'd against thee ; in Contempt of thy Goodness, Patience, and forbearance ; in Contempt of thy Astonishing Love manifested in Christ Jesus ; in Defiance of the clearest Revelation of thy Will and Pleasure by him ; in Defiance of thy Great and precious Gospel-Promises ; of all the Convictions of our own Consciences, calls of

O

ance

thy blessed Spirit, Sacred Word and Gracious Providences, admonishing us to be Reconciled unto thee our God !

And can'st thou O Lord, wilt thou after all this Disobedience, after all this presumptuous offending thee, be yet Reconciled to such vile wretches and miserable sinners as we are ? Is there still Mercy with thee that thou may'st be fear'd ? Is there still Hope for us in a Crucified Saviour ? O blessed Saviour help and deliver us we most humbly beseech thee ; by the Merits of thy Death and Passion, by the Justifying power of thy Resurrection and Ascension, by the prevalency of thy Mediation and Intercession, have Mercy upon us : Thy Compassions are always free and ready towards Repentant Offenders ; Lord we Repent, perfect our Repen-
tance ;

tance ; Lord we believe, O help
thou our unbelief ; we solemnly pro-
mise thee a more Reformed Obedi-
ence, a more exalted Righteousness,
O strengthen us to keep this our
promise, to perform this our holy
Resolution : Deliver us, O Hea-
venly Father, not onely from
the Guilt and Condemnation, but
also from the power and pollution
of our sins ; Assist us to break off
those Chains of evil Custom and Ha-
bit, those fetters of Worldly Cares,
and Temptations, those sensualiz-
ing Tyes of Corrupt Inclinations
or inordinate Passions in which
we have formerly been held Cap-
tive : Create clean hearts, O
God, and renew a-right Spirits within
us for the time to come ; beget in us
a true Faith, a sincere Repentance,
an enflam'd holy Love towards thee,
that we may Delight our selves in thy
Commandments, that we may walk
O 2 before

before thee in uprightness, in an ingenuous fear of Displeasing thee, in a joyous Carefulness of doing what is Acceptable in thy Sight : Diligently seeking thee, constantly Depending on thee, chearfully Submitting to thy Will, and Zealously practicing it in the Duties of our several Callings, with Godly sincerity and constancy unto our Lives End.

O Lord keep our feet, order our steps that they stray not out of the paths of thy Commandments, out of the Paths of Truth, Righteousness, and Peace ; O Lord keep our mouths as with a bridle, that we offend not at any time with our Tongues ; through profane Swearing, through lying, slandering, immodest filthy Speech, or false-witness-bearing ; endue us with the most enlarged and raised Christian Charity, with Temperance and Sobriety, with Purity and Chastity, with Meekness and
Humi-

Humility, that we may possess these our Earthly Vessels in Sanctification and Honour; and being Meek and Lowly, may find Rest unto our Souls.

Give us, holy Father, to Live more by Faith and Less by Sense; to Overcome by Faith the World, to live Above its Allurements or Determents, to have our Conversation in an higher degree in Heaven; to lay up to our selves Treasures there, that where our Treasures are, there may our Hearts be also: Make us account it our very Meat and Drink to be doing thy Will; Cause us to Evidence the Sincerity of our Love to thee our God, by our keeping Universally thy Commandments; open thou our Eyes that we may see the Delightful Excellencies of thy Law, the charming Beauty of Holiness, and then none of thy Divine precepts shall appear Grievous unto us; amidst all

our Temptations whether of the World, the Flesh, or the Devil, make thou us, O blessed Lord, more than Conquerors, through Christ who strengthens us : And after we have done all, after we have Grown in Grace (which we beseech thee cause us to do) after we have been fill'd with the fruits of thy Spirit, and endeavour'd our utmost the perfecting of holiness in thy Fear, keep us humble, keep us abased under a sense of the manifold Imperfections of our best and choicest Services.

*This to be added to the Evening Prayer where you see this * mark.*

Neither Pray we for our selves alone, but for the whole Race of Mankind ; That thy ways, O God, may be known upon Earth, thy Saving Health among all Nations.

Look down in Mercy upon thy holy Catholick Church ; Enlarge its
Bor-

Borders, Unite more its Members,
Purifie their Faith where Corrupt,
and work a General Reformation in
their Lives and Actions.

Bless, Holy Father, more especially these Nations whereunto we belong; Pardon our Great and Crying Sins, Avert from us thy Judgments, Encrease and Continue to us thy Blessings, make us an Holy and an Happy People; and Settle us upon the sure Foundations of Truth, Righteousness, and Peace.

Rule, O Lord, in the Hearts of our Sovereign Rulers, by thy Faith, Fear, and Love; Protect their Sacred Persons, Assist and Direct their Counsels, Succeed their Arms, and all their Righteous Undertakings; Make their Government a Great and Publick Blessing to these Kingdoms, and to the whole Protestant Interest; and after a Long and Prospe-

rous Reign over us Here, Crown them with Glory and Immortality in the highest Heaven.

Influence in a Peculiar Manner our Spiritual Governours and Teachers; Give them Wisdom and Prudence from Above: Make them, O God, Faithful and Zealous, make them also Successful in the Discharge of their Duties: and Grant that by the purity of their Doctrine and Integrity of their Lives, they may be as burning and shining Lights amidst a crooked and perverse Generation.

Visit with thy Salvation, O thou Father of Mercies, all the Sons and Daughters of Affliction; Sanctifie their Troubles, Support them with Faith and Patience under 'em, and in thy due time send them an happy Deliverance out of all their Sufferings

For-

Forgive, O God, all our Enemies, Persecutors, and Slanderers, and Turn their hearts. Bless all our Friends and Relations; be thou a God in Covenant with them, and make them Partakers of all the Benefits and Priviledges of that thy Covenant.

Bless all of us here present; bless us in Turning us from our Iniquities, in the Sanctifying and Renewing our Depraved Nature; Bless us with all Temporal, but especially with Spiritual Blessings in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Put us, O God, in frequent Mindfulness of our Latter End, and Fit and Prepare us for it; Help us to walk sincerely and uprightly in our whole Conversation; that Living here in thy Fear, we may Dye in thy Favour; may Rest in thy Peace, Rise by thy
O 5 Power,

310 *A Prayer for the Morning.*

Power, be Glorified by thy Bounty,
and Remain with thee for ever a-
midst Joys Celestial, Enravishing,
Inexhaustible. All which we beg
through the Merits and Mediation
of thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ,
who hath taught us when we pray
to say,

Our Father which art in Heaven,
...

A

A Prayer for the Evening.

OUR God, thou Almighty Lord of Heaven and Earth, Thou pure immaculate Spirit of Holyness, humble us under a sense of our meanness as indigent Dependant Creatures, of our exceeding Great Vileness, and impurity as Sinners; O with what pious fear and Reverence ought we to draw Nigh unto Thee, who art of purer Eyes than to behold the least iniquity with Approbation! With what Joy and Thankfulness ought we to acknowledge this thine inestimable favour, that thou who art so highly Exalted, wilt humble thyself to take notice of such Despicable polluted Beings as we are!

For

For ever blessed be thy Goodness, who hast made Prayer our Duty, which is so much our Interest and Priviledge; O how inexcusable should we be, should we neglect so Great a means of Grace and Salvation! Wilt thou, O Lord, Admit and Accept our poor unworthy Services, and shall not we Gladly Embrace the Pouchsafement? Since our Righteousness Extendeth not unto Thee, since we only are the Gainers by thy Service; which is its own Reward, which is our perfect freedom: O cause therefore all that is within us to bless thy holy Name; Cause all that is within us to render thee most willing and Cheerful Obedience.

But O God most Glorious, whose Transcendent Excellency is Exalted above all Glory and Praise; the more we Speak of thine Honour, the more we become Sensible how infinitely we fall short of it! O make us to shew forth thy praise, not only with our Lips, but

A Prayer for the Evening. 313

in our Lives, by giving up our selves to thy Service; by conforming our selves to thy Likeness in Holiness; by Raising, Spiritualizing, and Enflaming by thy help, our Affections towards thee in Prayer.

Yet Alas Alas, how soon are we weary of this most Delightful, most Beneficial Duty of Devotion! How much Averseness is there in us unto the Undertaking! how much Distraction of Thoughts, and Deadness of Spirit in the performance! What formality, want of Relish, want of Zeal and fervour is there mingled with the best of our Religious Services! How prone have we been to Deceive our selves with Shadows of Piety and Devotion, instead of the Substance! With a form of Godlyness, instead of the Life and power thereof! How prone to Content ourselves with the bare praises of thy Divine perfections, which we have not had the Godly Ambition, the Sincerity of
Heart

314 *A Prayer for the Evening.*

heart to imitate ; O pardon the sins and iniquities of these our Holy things !

But besides the imperfections of our best performances, how many ways have we presumptuously offended thee our God ! By innumerable Omissions and Commissions ; Omissions of Duty, Commissions of Evil ; by many frequently Repeated, and long Continued acts of wickedness ; by sinful provocations in Thought, Word, and Deed against thy Divine Majesty : O how often have we stifled the Convictions, the Reproofs of our own Consciences ! How often Resisted the holy motions, the Restraints of thy blessed Spirit ! How long neglected the Great Salvation of thy Gospel ! How many times violated our most Solemn Baptismal Vow and Covenant !

The very Multitude of our sins is Enough to Amaze and Affrighten us, to cover us with Shame and Confusion of face ; but the Heinousness, the Baseness,

A Prayer for the Evening. 315

ness, the Ingratitude of our mis-demeanours towards so Gracious and heavenly a Father, so Long-suffering a preserver, so Merciful a Benefactor, Sanctifier and Redeemer; O how Grievous is the Remembrance thereof to us, the burthen of so much wickedness how Intolerable!

O our God, Strong and patient, hadst thou not been God, how couldst thou have had patience with such perfidious, such ungrateful, such willfully Disobedient Rebels! Well for us is it, that thy mercy and forbearance Exceed that of Man, are like thy self, unlimited! O the Riches of thy Grace! wilt thou again Receive such prodigal Children into thy favour? Wilt thou Still be Reconciled unto us? Ah let thy Goodness, let thy Reconcileableness lead us to Repentance, to a more compleat consummated one; and our Repentance may it fit us for thy pardon and Acceptance,

And

316 *A Prayer for the Evening.*

And not meerly for the Pardon of our sins implore we mercy at thy hands, but for a Divine power to enable us to subdue them; Set we beseech thee, O Lord, our hearts in such a perfect Enmity against all things contrary to thy blessed Will and Nature, that we may never be Reconciled to them any more; dispose us to such an Entire Affection to thy Commandments, that they may become our Choice, our Desire, our Exceeding Great Rejoycing! O that we may walk more circumspectly, Redeeming the time, because the days are Evil! O that we may give all Diligence to make our Calling and Election Sure! O that the life, the pure unspotted life of Christ Jesus may be formed within us the hope of Glory!

Fill us, Gracious God, with the whole Knowledge of thy Will in all Wisdom and Spiritual Understanding, and Assist us with thy Grace unto the Conscientious practice of such knowledge; Increase in us that faith which worketh by Divine Love,

A Prayer for the Evening. 317

Love, which purifieth the heart and life, and overcometh the wicked world: Excite in us that ardent Affection to thee, which may make us chearfully Do thy Will, or patiently suffer it in all instances; and which will cause us to Love our brethren as our selves, for Christ's sake, with a pure heart, out of Love unfeigned; not in Tongue only, but also in Deed and in Truth.

Keep us, O Lord, pure and unspotted with the World; Temperate, Chaste, and Unspotted with the flesh; keep us Safe and unseduced by our own hearts lusts, by Satans wicked Suggestions and Allurements; Cause us to have our Conversation without Covetousness, to have it more in Heaven, less on Earth; teach us contempt of Earthly things; teach us to deny our selves, to conquer all Temptations, to live above the corruptions which so much abound in the Age: Give us Patience, give us supporting comfort, and quiet submission in Adversity;

318 *A Prayer for the Evening.*

versity ; let a contented mind be instead of all we want, and a thankful heart sweeten all our Enjoyments. O that we may mind more the one thing Necessary ; that we may seek in the first place the Kingdom of Heaven and its Righteousness ; and whatever other things we leave undone, we may be still working out our Salvation with fear and trembling !

Make us, O our God, more careful of pleasing thee, fearful of offending thee, diligent and industrious in thy Service ; more observant of thy Good Providence in every thing, more grateful for thy benefits Received, more readily disposed in all conditions to every good thought, word and work.

** Stir us up we entreat thee, to a frequent mindfulness of our Latter End, and fit and prepare us for it ; let our approaching sleep this Night put us in mind of our last sleep, our Bed remind*

A Prayer for the Evening. 319

us of our Grave, and the darkness of the evening of the days of Darkness which shall be many in the Chambers of Death; Lighten our Eyes, O Lord, that they sleep not therein, but that we may Awake with the morning Light unto thy Praise and Glory: Forgive those actual sins of thy servants which the day past hath been witness unto; Lord give us a Godly sorrow for them, a perfect hatred of them, and more carefulness to avoid them for the future: and whether we sleep this night in death, or awake to the fresh Mercies of the following day, O Grant that Christ Jesus may be unto us both in Life and Death, great Advantage: Grant this for the Merits and Mercy's-sake of him who dyed for our sins, and rose again for our Justification, and who hath left us this most Absolute form of Prayer wherewith to conclude our imperfect ones,

Our Father which art in Heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name, &c.

A Prayer

A Prayer for a Sick Person.

OUR God, full of Compassion and Truth, whose Ears are ever open to the Cryes of the Distressed, who afflictest not, neither Grieveest willingly the Children of Men, but in very Faithfulness Causest us to be Troubled; Chastising us for our Profit, that we may be Partakers of thy Holyness: We thy Poor Unworthy Creatures Address ourselves to the Throne of thy Grace, in behalf of this thy Servant Grieved with Sickness. O let his Grief of body move thy Succouring Pity; behold him with the Eyes of thy Mercy; Rescue him with the Almightyness of thy Power; how-
ever

A Prayer for a Sick Person. 321

ever Grant that the Infirmary of his
outer-Man, may tend to the Health
and Improvement of his Soul in all
Gracious Qualifications. O make
him by means of thy Divine Cha-
stisements Resemblant in a larger
Measure of thy Divine Nature; make
him Perfect through Sufferings; Train
him up a Good Souldier of Jesus
Christ by such Disciplining Hardships;
Teach him a more Compleat Obedi-
ence and Conformity to thy Will by
the things which he Endures: Relieve
him under all his Distresses; Give
him Patience, Repentance, and Sub-
mission under all his Uneasiness. Sup-
port him under all Tryals and Temp-
tations; O suffer not his Faith to fail
in this Day of Adversity; Strengthen
him in the Inner-Man especially, now
he lyes on a Bed of Languishing; O
make Thou his Bed in all his Sick-
ness: In the midst of the pains of his
Body, let thine Inward Comforts Re-
fresh his Soul; make all things, Tri-
bulation

bulation as well as Prosperity, work together for his Good ; may he Continue to be thy Servant under all Conditions.

Permit him not Gracious God, for any troubles of Life, or fears of Death to fall from Thee ; but Give him Joy and Consolation in Believing, when encompassed with the Sorest Distresses : Encrease therefore his Faith, Confirm his Hopes, Enlarge his Contentedness and Resignation ; Wean his Affections more and more from the things Below, and Raise and Settle them on the Good things Above.

Free, Blessed Lord, this thy Servant from all Murmuring and Repining at thy Afflictive Providence ; and Cause him rather to Rejoyce and Glory in Tribulation ; as knowing that the Tryal of his Faith worketh Patience, and Patience Experience,
and

A Prayer for a Sick Person. 323

and Experience Hope, and Hope maketh not Ashamed: O let Patience have its Perfect work in him; that he may be Compleat and Entire, wanting no Vertuous Endowment; let thy Grace be Sufficient for him, that he may not faint in the time of Calamity; O may his Affliction prove an Exercise and Enlargement of all his Graces: Let it beget in him greater Trust and Affiance in thy Divine Mercy, less Relyance on, and Confidence in the Creature, a being Crucified to the World, and the World to him, as to the immoderate Love of it.

Cause Holy Father, this thy Afflicted Son to Humble himself under thy Correcting hand, that Thou mayst Exalt him in thy due Season; make him to Cast all his Care upon Thee, because Thou carest for him; Give him to feel now in this his Distress, what is the Hope of his Spiritual

324 *A Prayer for a Sick Person.*

tual Calling, and what the Exceeding Greatness of thy Mercy and Power towards them who Believe in Thee; O Give him that Saving Faith which worketh by Love, and Purifieth the Heart, and Overcometh the World. Give him Repentance unto Newness of Life, never to be Repented of; Cause him by means of this Affliction to Search and Try his wayes, and turn him unto Thee his God, who in Mercy Chastisest him.

Afford him, Gracious Lord, afford this Sick Person the Comfort of an holy Hope that thou Acceptest his Penitential Tears and Contrition of heart; Support him by this Hope under all his Sickness and Distemper; Say unto him by the inward Testimonies of thy Spirit, I am thy Salvation, Son be of Good Chear, thy Sins are forgiven thee; I have heard thee in an Acceptable time, I have laid Help for Thee on one who is
mighty

A Prayer for a Sick Person. 325

mighty to Save, Jesus Christ the Righteous, He is the Propitiation for thy sins: O Apply the Merits and Satisfaction of his Dying Redeemer unto the Soul of this thy Servant, for Pardon and Acceptance; wash it clean in the Blood of that Immaculate Lamb, which was Slain, to take away the sins of the world, and through his Saviour's Stripes let him be Heal'd.

Bless and Succeed we beseech Thee those Remedies which have or shall be used for the Recovering this weak Afflicted Person to his former Health; Command Deliverance for him; Thou who art the God of Nature, Speak Nature within him into a due Temper and Composure: Known unto Thee are the most hidden things; O do Thou therefore adapt suitable Medicines to any unknown Cause or hidden Spring of this present Distemper; Suffer us, Heavenly Father,

R

to

326 *A Prayer for a Sick Person.*

to have Power with thee in Prayer, and mightily to Prevail on this thy Servants behalf : Thou hast Promised that the Prayer of Faith shall Save the Sick , and that the Effectual fervent Prayer of the Righteous shall Avail much ; O make us Pray in Faith, and Believing , so as to be Heard ; make us fervent and Zealous in Prayer, so as to have our Prayers Answered !

Restore , we entreat Thee , this Diseas'd Person, that he may be continued a Blessing and Comfort to his Relations ; that he may live to Performe his pious Vows and Resolutions made in time of Sicknes ; that he may spend the Residue of his Life more to thy Honour and Glory : But if in thy Fatherly wisdom thou see'st it fitting to Prolong his Corrections, thy Blessed Will be done ; and may thy Afflicted Servant say *Amen* with an Entire Submission :
May

A Prayer for a Sick Person. 327

May he bear further Chastisement in his Body, so that his Soul be but Saved in the Day of our Lord.

Yet O God most Gracious, O most Holy and Merciful Saviour, Thou most worthy Judge Eternal, be not Thou Extream to mark whatever he has done Amiss; Correct him, O Lord, but with Judgment; not in thine Anger, lest Thou bring him to nothing; and though thou take not off the Rod of Affliction, yet take away thy Displeasure we beseech thee far from him: Remember, O Lord, thy tender Mercies, and thy Loving-kindnesses which have been ever of old; and Cause this our Sick Friend in Thankful Recollection of former Divine Rescues, to put his Trust in thee for a Present Deliverance: O suffer him not for any Anguish of Body to let Go his Faith and Confidence in Thee; but give him to say with the Stedfastness of holy *Job*

P 2 though'

328 *A Prayer for a Sick Person.*

though he Kills me, yet will I hope in him.

Fit, O God, this Languishing Person for whatever Condition thou shalt call him unto, that thy Son Christ Jesus may be unto him whether in Life or Death great Advantage; O permit him not to Depart hence at any time, but with all imaginable Preparations for Eternity; with a Soul thoroughly Changed and Renewed, with a Soul full fraught with thy Divine Love; Humble and Resign'd, Cheerful and Enravisht with future Expectations: And then whenever this his Earthly Tabernacle shall be Dissolved, he shall have a building of God, an house not made with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens: Which we beseech thee to Grant both him and us, for the alone Sake and Merits of thy Son our Saviour; to whom together with Thee O Father, and thy Holy
and

A Prayer for a Sick Person. 329

and Ever-blessed Spirit, be Ascribed
as is most Due, all Honour, Praise,
Might, Majesty, and Dominion,
from this time forth and for Ever-
more. *Amen, Amen.*

P 3

A Prayer

*Another Prayer for the Sick, when
there appears small Hopes of Reco-
very.*

O Most Glorious and Merciful
Heavenly Father, the Lord
and Giver of Life, the Healer and
Repairer of our Decay'd Nature,
who bringest down to the Grave,
and then sayst Come again ye Chil-
dren of Men ; Giving Power to
the Faint, and to those who have
no Might increase of Strength : Be-
hold, we beseech thee Favourably,
Visit Graciously, and Relieve spee-
dily this thy Servant, who standeth
in Need of thy Pitty and Relief ;
Be Thou a very Present Help unto
him, O Lord, now in the Necessi-
tous

tous time of his Trouble. O let thy tender Mercies come unto him, that he may Live; Encompafs him with thy Favour as with a Shield; Pitty and Purifie him, Sanctifie and Save him we most humbly beseech thee: Either Allwage his Pain, or else Increase his Faith and Patience to bear it: Either Remove his Affliction, or else move towards him with Divine Comfort and Support: Lay upon him, Gracious God, no more than thou shalt enable him with Willingness and Submission to undergo, and then lay on him whatsoever shall seem Good in thy Sight.

O Give him a Sanctified Use and Improvement of thy Fatherly Corrections; let them teach him more Humility, Contentedness and Resignation; less Trust and Relyance on the Creature: Cause him, O Lord, by means of his present Distress, to

see the Emptiness, Deceit, and Instability of all Earthly Possessions; and may this Conviction carry up his Mind to the satisfying Everdurable Enjoyments of Heaven: O that his Devout Conversation there in Holy Meditations, Fervent Prayers, and Transporting Praises, may Allay much of his Corporal Pains and Disquietudes, and render him in a manner Insensible of them: O that thy Word and blessed Promises may be his sure Trust and Confidence in Adversity; tho' he walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, yet let him fear no Evil, may thy Rod as well as thy Staff Comfort and Sustain him.

Give him, Holy Lord, unfeigned Repentance for all the Miscarriages of his Life past, Stedfast Faith in thy Son Jesus, Compleat Pardon and Forgiveness through the Merits of his Blood,

Blood, a lively Hope of that Immortal Bliss, which his Redeemer has Dearly Purchased, and most Graciously Promised to true Believers; a strong Sense of thy Fatherly Love towards him, and tender Care over him even amidst his Sufferings.

O cause this Sick Person to Apprehend and be Assured that thou intendest his Spiritual Benefit and Amendment by these thy Corrections; that they are the Chastisements of a Loving Father, and not of an Incensed Judge; that they are the healing Medicines of a Friend, and not the avenging Wounds of an Enemy: O Convince him, Convince him, that in making him endure Chastening, thou dealest with him as with one of thy Children; for what Son is he whom the Father Chasteneth not? That thou seekest to Conform him by Afflictions to the Likeness of

P ;

his

his Blessed Saviour; O may he be made Perfect through Sufferings: Teach him we Pray thee more Obedience through the things which he Endures; May his Chastening however Grievous for the Present, afterwards yield him the Peaceable Fruits of Righteousness; may it turn to his Spiritual Profit and Advantage, and help him forward in the Right way which leadeth unto Life Everlasting.

Take, O God, from this thy Servant, all Murmuring Discontent under thy Disciplining Providence; Cause him rather Quietly to submit to thy Afflicting Hand, as Considering that Affliction ariseth not out of the Dust, proceedeth not meerly from Natural Causes, but from thy Wise Providence and Appointment, who Orderest all things toward us for our Good; O Perswade this Sick Person
'tis

'tis for his Good that he is Afflicted ; that of very Faithfulness thou hast Caused him to be troubled : O make him by Searching and Trying his ways to find out those particular Sins and Failings which thou Aimest at in this his Chastisement ; to Observe and Understand thy Meaning in the Calamities which befall him ; that he may accordingly meet thee in thy Providential Ways and Dealings towards him ; that so the Removal of his Guilt by Repentance, through the Merits of his Saviour, may make Way for the Removal of thy Divine Rod of Punishment.

And do Thou the God of all Grace and Truth, who hast called this thy Corrected Son to Suffering, by thy Fatherly Wisdom and Goodness ; after that he hath suffered a while for his Souls Profit, Stablish, Strengthen, Settle him.

Let

Let we Pray thee thy Merciful Kindness be this Afflicted Person's Succour and Safety ; send him Help from Above, and Evermore mightily Defend him ; Defend him, O Lord, from all Satan's disquietting Assaults, from all his Wicked Temptations : O let not that Evil one have any Advantage over him in these his sorrowful Hours ; but Rebuke him, Good Lord, Rebuke him ; Tread that old seducing Serpent under this thy Servant's Feet, and make him more than Conqueror through Christ who strengthens him.

Work, Holy Father, Deliverance for him whom thou Chastitest ; Heal him, and he shall be Healed ; Save him, and he shall be saved ; for thou art the God of his Praise ; O make him to hear again of Joy and Gladness, that the Bones which thou hast broken may Rejoice. But

But if thou in thy Wisdom hast Decreed that this thy Servants Sick-ness shall be unto Death; Fit and Prepare him for it we beseech thee; Give him a more perfectly Holy and Heavenly Constitution of Soul, an Heart Wean'd and Estranged from this World, a sanctified Meetness to be made Partaker of an Inheritance with the Saints in Light and Glory: O may his last Hours be his Best Hours; his last Thoughts his Best Thoughts; and his last Words and Actions his best Words and Actions: The Nearer he draws to the End of his Days, cause him so much the Nearer to draw to the End of his Hopes, even the Salvation of his Soul.

For this Purpose, Apply we Entreat thee, all the Benefits of our Saviour's Perfect Obedience and Meritorious Sufferings unto this Dying Person for
Recon-

Reconciliation and Acceptance : Impute not, Gracious Lord, unto him, his former Sins, but thy Well-beloved Son's Allsufficient Righteousness; who was Wounded for our Transgressions, and bruised for our Iniquities: O let the Peace purchased by thy Son's Chastisements be upon this thy Servant, and by his Redeemers Stripes let him be heal'd.

Wash his Soul clean, O God, in Christ's most Precious Blood; Conform him more and more to the Holy Doctrine and Example of the Ever-blessed Jesus; Sanctifie him with all the Saving Graces of thy Renewing Spirit: Give him, if it be thy Will, some Delightful Foretastes and Anticipations of Celestial Blessedness; Hope towards Thee, an Enravisht Sense of thy Favour, Joys in the Holy Ghost, unspeakable and full of Approaching Glories: However, if
this

this be too great a Vouchsafement,
make him at least Willing to be Dis-
solved, Fit for Heaven, Full of his
Saviour, Empty of himself, and of all
Trust in his own Defective Righte-
ousness ; and whenever thou takest
him out of this World, take him we
Beseech Thee unto thy self into Ever-
lasting Felicity, *Amen*, Holy Jesu, for
thy Precious Death and Passions sake,
Amen.

A Prayer to be used on the Lord's
Day in the Morning, Preparatory
to the Duties of the Day.

Blessed and Glorious Lord God,
Thou Lord and Instituter of the
Sabbath, who allowest us Six Days in
Seven for our Temporal and Worldly
Concerns, and hast Set Apart the Se-
venth only for thine own more Especial
Service; O how wisely hast thou Provi-
ded for both our Souls and Bodies! For
how would our Outward-Man want
Food and Raiment, were not Days of
Labour afforded it, wherein by honest
Industry to procure those Necessaries;
and how would our Spirits Pine away,
and Languish as to all Gracious Endow-
ments,

A Prayer on the Lord's Day. 341

ments, were not Seasons appropriated to thy Divine Worship.

O that therefore at present we may Rest from the works of Sin, as well as from those of our particular Callings; O that we may be in the Spirit on this thine own Day; that we may worship thee thereon in Spirit and in Truth; that we may keep it so Holy and Sanctified unto Thee, as that it may be a Pledge and Earnest of an Eternal Sabbathism with thee in Light and Glory. This is the Day which the Lord hath made by his Justifying Resurrection, O may we Rejoice and be Glad therein with an Holy Rejoycing! This is the Day which was the Birth-Day of our Hopes and future Blessed Expectations, O may it prove a Day of Growth and Improvement in Grace; of holy Ardours, and Devout Enravings!

Grant Gracious Father, that we may not find our own Pleasure, nor Speak

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our own Words, nor do our own Deeds on this thine Hallowed-Day, but may both Call and Esteem it a Delight, Holy of the Lord, Honourable; O that Heaven, an a Heavenly Frame and Temper of Spirit may be Begun in us Here, by means of our pious Intercourses with Heaven amidst the Duties of thy Day!

We are Going, O Lord, unto thy House of Prayer, the Place where thine Honour dwells; O pardon us, that we are not Prepared according to the Preparation of thy Sanctuary; that we have not yet put off our Carnal and Earthly Affections; Considering that the place whereon we are to stand is Holy Ground.

O do Thou, our God vouchsafe to Go along with us into thy Temple, by the Holy Aids and Assistances of thy Spirit; Cause us to Approach Thee there with Reverence, and to worship before thee with a Zealous Affection when we Meditate,

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Meditate, let us do it with all Seriousness, Heavenly-Mindedness, and Edification; when we Pray, let it be with the utmost Attention, Faith, and holy Fervour; when we Hear the Glad Tidings of thy Gospel, may it be with all Diligent and hearty Attendance on thy Word and Doctrine; when we Read thy Holy Scriptures, may they make us wise unto Salvation; may we Read them with Understanding, with an Affectionate Gust and Relish, with a Reforming Change, and inward Digestion of them into Spiritual Grace and Nourishment.

O may this Day be added to our Share in an Happy Eternity, by our Religious Improvement of it; mayst Thou our God come Down unto us herein by thy Divine Influences, and may we be Taken up unto thee by Devout Praises and Adorations.

Accom-

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Accompany we beseech Thee, O Lord, with thine own more Especial Presence, thine own more Especial Ordinances and holy Institutions : Cause us by the Spiritual food of pious Duties, to Increase in Grace, and to be Nourished up to a perfect Manhood in Christ Jesus : Being Rooted and Grounded in Divine Love, and built up through Faith unto a Capacity of Eternal Salvation.

How Earthly, O God, would be our Affections, How Carnal and Sensual our Souls, were their Thoughts and Desires alwayes busied about the things of this World ! Blessed be thy Name therefore that thou hast Enjoyn'd us a Season, wherein to call off our Thoughts and Affections from things Temporal ; wherein to unloosen our Spirits from Sense and Sensual Concernments, and allowest us a Sweet Converse and Communication with Thee the Fountain of all Happiness ! O make us more to value this inestimable Priviledge ; make us at present

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present to Improve it to the best Advantage; Cause us to hold a pious Harmony of Praises and Hallelujahs with thy Blessed Saints and Angels now in Heaven: 'Tis the Employment will be our Continual Joy and Blissful Recreation in the Regions Above; O give us therefore to Habituate our selves to it Now, and thereby partake of Heavenly Satisfaction even on Earth!

Give a Blessing to thy word Preached, and to the Prayers offer'd to thy Divine Majesty on this Day; while Paul plants and Apollos waters, do Thou, O God, Give the Sanctifying Increase: That we may be able Experimentally to say, we have Tasted and Seen, how Gracious the Lord is; we have of a Truth found how 'tis Good for us that we have waited upon thee in the midst of thine holy Ordinances: And then by these means of Grace being Train'd up and Fitted for Everlasting Glory, we shall at length be Translated thither, where
the

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the Exercises of Holyness shall Cease, be-
ing means of Begetting or Confirming
us in Grace, and shall only be our De-
light, and Joy, and Heavenly Enter-
tainment for an Eternal Duration.
Amen, Blessed Lord, Amen.

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